

LECTURES  
ON THE  
CHURCH CATECHISM,  
DELIVERED IN  
THE PARISH CHURCH OF  
*ST. GEORGE THE MARTYR,*  
SOUTHWARK,

---

By the Rev. H. DRAPER, A.M.  
LECTURER OF THAT PARISH, AND SUNDAY EVENING PREACHER  
AT ST. ANTHOLIN'S, WATLING-STREET.

---

“ And I, brethren, when I came unto you, came not with  
excellency of Speech or of Wisdom, declaring unto you the  
Testimony of GOD.” 1 Cor. ch. ii. ver. 1.

“ But all is in *his* hand, whose praise I seek.  
“ In vain the poet sings, and the world hears,  
“ If he regard not, though divine the theme.” COWPER.

---

L O N D O N:

Printed at the PHILANTHROPIC REFORM, London-Road, Surry.  
To be had of the AUTHOR, next the Public Kitchen, St. George's Fields.

---

1799.



22/559



TO  
THE PARISHIONERS  
OF  
*ST. GEORGE THE MARTYR,*  
S O U T H W A R K;  
THE FOLLOWING LECTURES  
DELIVERED IN THEIR CHURCH,  
AND  
PUBLISHED AT THEIR DESIRE,  
ARE INSCRIBED AS A  
TOKEN OF GRATEFUL AND AFFECTIONATE RESPECT,  
BY THEIR  
FAITHFUL AND OBLIGED SERVANT,  
*THE AUTHOR.*





## ADVERTISEMENT.

---

THESE Lectures are presented to the public at the request of the Congregation, to whom they were delivered. They were designed to exhibit the conformity of our *Church Catechism* with the *Holy Scripture*. The Author is convinced that the doctrine they inculcate is no less according to the word of GOD, than to the Liturgy, Articles, and Homilies, of the church of England. They were preached with a desire to promote the glory of GOD, and the salvation of sinners; and are printed with the same view. May his blessing rest upon them who “hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.” Amen.

## LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS.

REV. Mr. Abdy

Mr. Armstrong

Mrs. Alsager

Mr. Barnes

Mr. Brooke

Mr. Burton

Thomas Bailey, Esq. 2 copies

Mr. R. Blunt

Mr. W. Blunt

Mr. T. Blunt

Matthew Bloxam, Esq. M.P.

James Bulcock, Esq.

Mr. Thomas Burbidge

Mr. William Bebbe

Mr. S. Bawtree, 2 copies

Mr. James Bedell

Mrs. Bovis

Mrs. Beadle

Mr. Chalmers

Captain Curling

Mr. J. Cot

Mr. Richard Cooper

Mr. William Cooper

Mr. Carter

Mr. Courthope

Mr. Carter

Mr. William Dixon, 2 copies

Mr. John Dixon, 2 copies

Mr. Thomas Draper

Miss Draper

Mr. Samuel Draper

Miss Martha Draper

Mr. E. Draper

Mr. Dickson

Mr. Daking

*Mr James Cooper*

Philip Finnimoor, Esq.

Mr. T. P. Fatt

Mr. S. Field, 6 copies

Mr. A. Field, 6 copies

Mr. Thomas Griffith, 2 copies

Mr. Gibbs

Mrs. Gillett

Mr. J. W. Groves

Mrs. Graves

Mr. Gaunt

Mr. James Hedger, 6 copies

Captain Hooper

Mr. Thomas Hogsflesh

Mr. Thomas Hantsley

Mr. Robert Haseldine

Mr. Charles Holehouse

Miss Hickman, 2 copies

Mr. William Holmer

Mr. Hallam

Mr. Hall

Mr. Hust

Mr. Thomas Jones

Mr. William Jones

Mr. Samuel Jones

Mr. John Kilvington, 2 copies

Mr. James Knowles

Mr. Liardett

Mr. S. Lewis

Mr. T. Lester

Rev. H. C. Mason

Rev. Mr. Myddelton, 2 copies

Rev. W. Mann

Rev. J. Mann

Mrs. Morris

Mr. Musgrave

*Mr Joseph Meymott*

LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS.

Mr. Thomas Moulder	Mr. Smart
Mrs. Martin	Mr. Standfast
Mr. Maskelyne	Mrs. Stevenson
Mr. Meymott	Mr. John Sudlow
James Newsom, Esq.	Mrs. Sheppard
Mr. Thomas Newman	Mr. Sterry
Mr. John Nicholls	Mr. John Thornton
W. Nottidge, Esq.	Mr. Edward Thornton
Mrs. Oliver	Mr. Joseph Taylor
Mr. Oliver	Mr. S. Taysum
Mr. W. Oakley	Thomas Thornton, Esq.
Mr. J. Oakley	Mrs. Thornton
Mr. Odber	Mr. N. H. Towle
Rev. W. Pearcy	Rev. Thomas Wigzell, 2 copies
H. Pigeon, Esq.	Rev. Mr. Winkworth
Mr. John Pinkney	David Walters, Esq.
Mrs. Price	Jas. Woodbridge, Esq.
Mr. Thomas Price	Thomas Willimot, Esq.
Mr. John Price	Mrs. Willimot
Mr. Ramsay, 6 copies	Mr. J. C. Wrench
Mr. Rodbard, 2 copies	Mr. Welch
Mrs. Reed	Mr. Ward
Mr. H. Reed, 2 copies	Mr. J. Watts
Mrs. H. Reed, 2 copies	Dr. West
Mr. W. Richardson, jun.	Miss Winter
Mr. James Ray	Mr. George Ware
Mr. William Rossiter	Robert Winter, Esq.
Mr. Read, 6 copies	Mr. Richard Watts
Mr. Rumford	Mr. Williamson
Mr. Morgan Rees	Mr. Willett
Mr. Ratcliffe	Mr. W. Varney
Mr. Smith	Mr. F. Young
William Stubbs, Esq.	Mr. William Yate.
Mr. W. G. Smith	



# ERRATA.

Page.

- 8, for extravagence, *read* extravagance.
- 10, for scripture, *read* scripture.
- 11, for plainness, *read* plainness
- 14, for advantageous, *read* advanced.
- For peerfect, perfect.
- 23, after vegetable, *insert* world.
- 42, for some, *read* same.
- 68, for menance, *read* menace.

Page.

- 75, after other, *insert* hand.
- 146, after been, *in ert* so.
- 164, for is, *read* it.
- 205, for wound, *read* wounds.
- 210, after must, *insert* not.
- 214, for wordl, *read* world.
- 313, instead of neighbour, *read* neighbour.

## LECTURES, &c.

---

### LECTURE I.

---

PROVERBS, chap. xxii. verse 6.

*Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*

THOSE who read the holy scriptures with attention and prayer, will soon find cause to adopt that declaration of the royal Psalmist, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”\* There is so great a perspicuity in all the sacred precepts, that they cannot well be misunderstood. This highway of holiness is plain; “the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.”†

The children of God are described as wayfaring men; they are, indeed, strangers and pilgrims upon earth. However they may be deficient in human attainments, however they may be reproached as ignorant, as fools, by the learned and mighty of this world, yet they alone possess true wisdom. God hath taught them the things which pertain unto their peace; he hath made them wise unto salvation. A

\* Ps. cxix. ver. 105.

† Isa. ch. xxxv. ver. 8.

knowledge this, which the world, with all its philosophical acquirements, could never attain.

The duties which the sacred writings inculcate, are enforced by the most important considerations; they are, likewise, so intimately connected with both our interest, and comfort, that whosoever neglects them, injures himself.

Among many useful injunctions recorded in the sacred volume, the text claims our most serious attention. It directeth us unto that conduct, which, under God, may be expected to secure the temporal and everlasting happiness of the rising generation. Yea, it is also calculated to promote the peace and prosperity of our native land; for, certainly, if true religion, if practical godliness prevail, it will prosper; but if these decay, it shall, with them, decline and fade away. "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."\* The cause of true religion will be most effectually advanced among us, by a scrupulous care and attention in cultivating the minds of our youth. The complexion of their future life doth, indeed, greatly depend upon the principles they imbibe, the habits they form, at this early period. If these be proper, we may expect that the other will not greatly deviate from the path of rectitude; but, if the early sentiments and manners are

\* Prov. ch. xiv. ver. 34.



incorrect, we must not be surprised if the riper years are stained with vice and immorality. "Train up, therefore, your children in the way wherein they should go, and when they are old, they will not depart from it."

We shall consider the subject before us in the following manner:

First, We will enquire, what is the way in which a child should go?

Second, We will endeavor to shew, what it is to train him up in that way.

Third, We shall contemplate the beneficial effects which, under God, may be expected as the result of faithfully performing this most important duty.

We are first to enquire, what is the way in which a child should go?

If, upon the present occasion, I should address myself to those who are parents, or teachers of youth, and ask their opinion upon this subject, how many different replies I might receive! Some would probably tell me, that the way in which a child should go, is that which conducts to worldly honor, to riches, and power; others, perhaps, might assert that to be the right path which leads to the summit of wisdom

and knowledge, so that, if possible, their child might exhibit himself to the astonished world, either as an Horsley in divinity, a Newton in mathematical knowledge; or a Boyle in natural philosophy. But, if I turn from these to the word of truth, which is the only infallible guide, I shall not accede to their sentiments. For I am informed, that “the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all they that do his commandments.”\* It is likewise said, “It is much better to get wisdom than gold; and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver.”† Such declarations dispose me to think, that the way in which a child should go, is first, and principally, that of godliness and piety. The Levitical law enjoined parents to present their first-born unto the LORD; and, by the rite of circumcision, to dedicate all their male children unto himself. The following was the command given them, respecting the way in which their children should go: “These words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children.” The words of GOD are not merely to float upon the mind; for so, they inflate the man with pride and self conceit. They are not always to be on the tongue, displayed in an ostentatious profession. No; they shall be in thine heart; “for with the heart, man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth, confession is made unto salvation.” They

\* Ps. cxl, ver. 10.

† Prov. ch. xvi, ver. 16.

must not be recited to youth in a superficial manner; but inculcated, as containing the most valuable information upon subjects highly interesting to mankind. It is also said, "thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD our GOD hath commanded you? then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt, and the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand."\* This injunction sufficiently explains the manner in which the truths of GOD must be taught.—May GOD enable every parent, and instructor of youth, to comply therewith!

When our blessed LORD dwelt, in the form of a servant, upon earth, little children were presented unto him, whom he despised not, but took them in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them! This example is worthy of imitation. Parents, guardians, instructors, adopt a similar conduct. Bring your tender lambs to the LORD JESUS CHRIST; present them unto him in the sacrament of baptism, an ordinance of his own appointment; devote them unto him by a pious education, with fervent prayer, that his blessing may crown your exertions with de-

\* Deut. ch. vi. ver. 6, 7, 20.



sired success. You will then train them up in the proper way. This should be your grand object. Your offspring have immortal souls, for the happiness of which, you are, in a very high degree, responsible. Know that if by your neglect they perish, GOD will certainly require them at your hands!

It is much to be lamented that, in our modern systems of education, religion finds little or no place. Great exertions, indeed, are made to inculcate the wisdom of this world, and to polish the manners; but little care is taken to instruct and amend the heart, by introducing it to the knowledge of true religion. A modern writer hath well remarked, that our youth

“ Are thus well tutor'd, only while they share  
A mother's lectures, and a nurse's care.  
And taught, at schools, much mythologic stuff,  
But sound religion sparingly enough.”\*

What opinion would you form of that man, who should devote all his time to polish an almost worthless casket, while he neglected a valuable jewel therein contained? You would properly question the sanity of his mind; yet whatever you could urge against such a character, would redound, with the greatest force, upon yourselves, whose entire exertions are employed to embellish the person of your child, to give him a graceful and engaging deportment, while you neglect

\* Cowper.

to train him up in the path of life. You adorn a corruptible frame, which must soon moulder in the grave ; you neglect an immortal spirit, which through your wicked inattention may finally perish !

So far as temporal things are concerned, " The way in which a child should go," will greatly depend upon the designs of the parent. Every effort must be made to qualify him for that situation wherein they purpose that he should be placed. Otherwise the station he occupies may impose duties for the discharge of which he possesses neither abilities nor inclination ; thus will he be exposed to the contempt and indignation of the wise and upright among men.

If he is designed for a mechanic, the path of humility, of industry, of sobriety and integrity, is that wherein he should be guided. These indeed are virtues requisite in every condition of life. Without them riches confer no honour, learning can claim but little respect. These will ensure regard and esteem wherever they are found. Let him therefore be trained in these, and not by an ill judged or frivolous education, be disqualified for that useful and respectable state of life. If intended for a more liberal employ, his education should be adopted to that.

Parents, in their purposes respecting the future appointment of their offspring, should consider their own circumstances, that they may not indiscreetly

lavish on one, that which should be for the comfort and benefit of all, nor render a child unhappy by placing him in a situation unto the necessary expences of which his means will most probably be inadequate.

It is much to be lamented that these things are generally disregarded. Indeed the system which many adopt, seems calculated to destroy, rather than promote the happiness and prosperity of their families. They introduce their offspring betimes to fashionable dissipation. They habituate them to folly, extravagance and vice. Thus in due time their property is wasted, their constitution enervated, their peace and good fame utterly destroyed.

Others are found who so train their children in the love of riches, with covetousness and penury, that when they attain unto riper years, they behold their fellow creatures merely as objects of plunder and deceit. Happy are those parents who, taught of GOD train up their children in the nurture and admonition of the LORD; and learn them early that divine art of using this world without abusing it, because the fashion of this world passeth away. This knowledge will be an advantage to them in every state of life; without it, they can be respectable in none.—We proceed,

2d. To explain what it is to train up a child in this way wherein he should go.

The literal import of the word *train*, is to cate-



chise, to instruct by asking questions. To train up a child in the way of religion and piety, which is the path wherein he ought to walk, is therefore to instruct him in the great truths of religion, and the important duties it requires, in such a manner as is best adapted to his comprehension, whether it be by familiar questions respecting the nature of true religion, or in any other method. For conveying instruction by question and answer, our excellent church catechism stands almost unrivalled. It comprises within a moderate compass every truth essential to salvation. The answers it provides are such as to instruct without fatiguing. The doctrines it inculcates will endure the severest scrutiny of examination by the word of truth. We observe this in the very commencement of it; for it is asserted, "that we are by baptism made members of CHRIST, children of GOD, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven." It must not be apprehended that the assertion is made merely with reference to an immersion in water. Let our catechism speak for itself. It asserts of baptism, that in its inward and spiritual grace, it is a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness. This definition is scriptural, therefore just. For it is written, we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as CHRIST was raised up from the dead, by the glory of the FATHER, even so we also should walk in newness of life.\*

\* Rom. ch. vi. ver. iv.

If we compare this account of baptism with the assertion above recited, it will be found to convey the following sentiment: That every person, who through grace is dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto GOD, being thus "Baptised with the HOLY GHOST, is made a member of CHRIST, a child of GOD, and an inheritor of the kingdom of Heaven." We shall recite a few of those scriptures which confirm the truth of this declaration. Believers are here described as "Members of CHRIST." Now our blessed LORD saith, "I am the vine, ye are the branches, abide in me, and I in you."\* St. Paul declares, "that such are members of the Redeemer's body, of his blood, and of his bones."† They are also called "children of GOD." It is written, "as many as received him, to them gave he power to become sons of GOD, even to them that believe on his name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of GOD."‡ It is also said that they are "inheritors of the kingdom of heaven." The testimony of holy scripture is this—"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of GOD; and if children then heirs, heirs of GOD, and joint heirs with CHRIST." To include in a single Lecture every instance of the agreement which subsists between the word of GOD and our catechism, is impracticable.

\* St. John, ch. xv. ver. 1, 4. † Ep. ch. v. ver. 30.

‡ St. John, ch. i. ver. 12, 13.

It is my intention, if the LORD permit, to establish in a course of Lectures, the scripture truth of this summary of sound doctrine. Our observations upon the subject will be plain, experimental and practical. We shall studiously avoid all uninteresting disquisitions, and express our sentiments with plainness of speech. We pray that GOD may assist us in the prosecution of our design, and prosper it with his blessing! If but one soul should hereby be converted from the error of his ways, or established in the faith as he hath been taught, our labour will be amply rewarded.

We shall for the present content ourselves with introducing one instance more, wherein the harmony between the Scripture and the Catechism is remarkably displayed. We are taught by the latter, that bread and wine are the emblems of the body and blood of our SAVIOUR CHRIST, which are verily and indeed taken by the faithful in the LORD'S supper, to the strengthening and refreshing of their souls. At the institution of this most solemn ordinance our blessed LORD adopted the following appropriate language: "Take, eat, this is my body"; and he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, "Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the New-Testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins."\* Upon another occasion he thus spake: "Verily,

\* St. Mat. ch. xxvi. ver. 26, 27.



verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the SON of man, and drink his blood, (that is, spiritually, and by faith) ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day, for my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.\*

It is much to be regretted that parents and instructors are generally satisfied with a mere repetition of the catechism. They seem to think that having taught their children to repeat its answers in an accurate manner, their duty is well done. If they intend merely to provide for the child a variety of expressions, any other publication would as well answer their purpose; but if they design to communicate information upon religious subjects, it is necessary to explain the nature and tendency of those answers which are repeated. Indeed they suggest a variety of familiar and instructive questions. The following queries naturally rise from the two first replies given in our catechism. What doth your christian name denote? What is it to be a child of GOD: What to be a member of CHRIST, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven? We introduce these merely as a specimen of that method which we think should be adopted in teaching the catechism. It is easy to perceive the great advantages which would result from some such plan. May I be permitted to recommend

\* St. John, chap. vi. ver. 53, 54, 55.

it to all those who are employed in the education of children? It is a conviction of its utility to the rising generation, which induces me to do this.

Great care must be taken, that example and precept accord well with each other. If these be at variance, instruction will produce no manner of effect; for example hath much greater influence than precept. If, therefore, examples of profligacy and irreligion are constantly exhibited before children, the precepts of prudence and godliness will not counteract their baneful tendency. It cannot, without great concern, be observed, how often a parent's house is the worst place in which their children can be situated. Their manner of life and deportment so essentially deviates from the path of rectitude, that those trained with such examples before them, are almost certain to become the pest of society! We apprehend indeed, that many who have fallen victims to the injured laws of their country, may justly attribute their ruin to the very reprehensible conduct they witnessed in the early stages of life; and that perhaps even in the house of a parent.

Those who would train up their children in the right way, must attempt it by exemplifying in their own conduct those precepts they think proper to inculcate; when this is secured, we may hope that our exertions will prove successful. For, if the instructed observe an harmony between the conduct

and the precept, they will not only give the more attention, but they will also repose the greatest confidence in the uprightness and sincerity of their instructor. We proceed

Thirdly, To contemplate the beneficial effects which, under God, may be expected as the result of faithfully performing this most important duty.

Our text suggests an advantage resulting from a religious education, which is of great importance. "When he is old, he will not depart from it". An upright conduct in the decline of life, is the probable and almost invariable consequence of an early introduction to the ways of godliness. We are so much the creatures of habit, that we generally act without reflection, under its influence ; if, therefore, due care be taken to imprint upon the mind just principles, and to form right habits in the conduct, during the earlier stages of life, there is good reason to hope that their influence will not fail at a more advantageous period, when experience and mature judgment shall have confirmed their rectitude and importance. Be ye, therefore, unto whom the education of youth is confided, studious, by every possible means, to instil into their tender minds the principles of true religion and virtue. Guide them in this pure and perfect way, and that instruction may produce the desired effect, let your example confirm and elucidate the precept you enforce.



Another beneficial consequence, which, through the divine blessing, is likely to result from a faithful performance of this duty, is the salvation of their immortal spirits, whom we instruct. We cannot, indeed, always command success, as the necessary consequence of exertion; but when we use the means, we may expect the blessing. God hath indeed graciously promised that it shall be given. He saith, "as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."\* How animating is this promise! We are thereby assured, that the means will prove effectually conducive in the accomplishment of that purpose for which they were designed. Let, therefore, those unto whom the care and management of the rising generation is committed, diligently use the means of grace. Let them carefully instruct the tender mind in the great truths of holy writ; let them water these instructions with earnest prayer for the divine blessing, and then leave it with God, in his own good time to impart the desired success. We may, likewise, under God, by faithfulness in the discharge of this duty, expect to

\* Isaiah, chap. lv. ver. 10, 11.

promote our own growth in grace. It is written, "the soul of the diligent shall be made fat;"\* and it is also said, "he that watereth, shall be watered also himself."† In instructing others, we frequently teach ourselves. And while we are proclaiming the riches of redeeming love to our fellow saints, in our own hearts the holy fire is often kindled.

We may be assured, that the way of duty will ever prove a path of improvement, of happiness, and of honor. "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."‡ May God so strengthen us in the way of duty, that we shall not turn aside either to the right-hand or to the left! Parents, guardians, instructors, learn the conduct which God requireth you to adopt. You are called to instruct in the ways of godliness all those committed to your care, not only by precept, but likewise by example.

We remind you, that the last great hope\* of the country is entrusted in your hands. To you she looks as responsible for the virtue and patriotism of her growing sons. Give, therefore, all diligence in the discharge of your important duty, that when you shall resign the trust you have received, the purity of their lives, whose instructors you have been, may prove your diligence and integrity. God hath committed

\* Prov. chap. 13. ver. 4.

† Ibid. chap. 11. ver. 25.

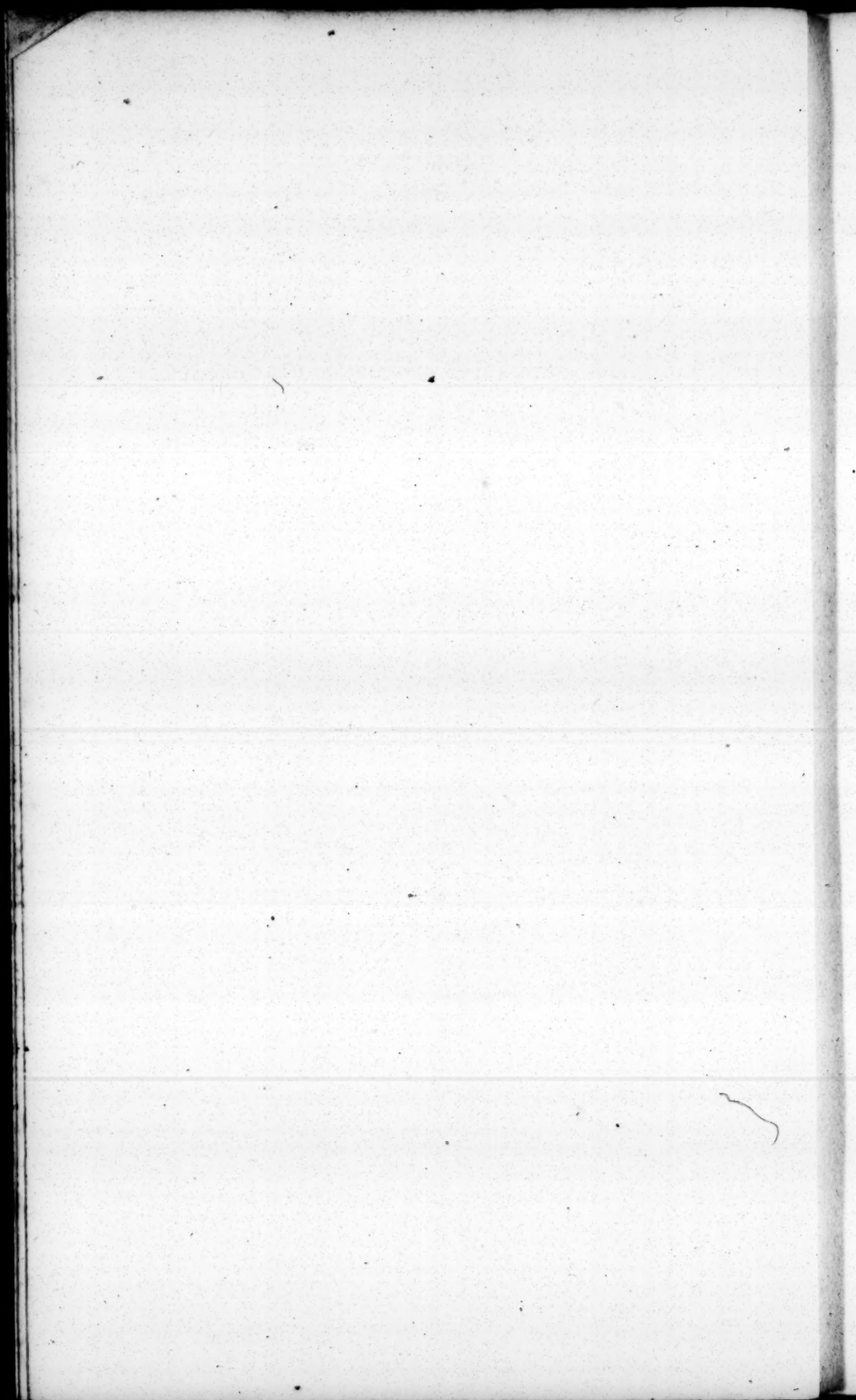
‡ Prov. chap. 3. ver. 17.

to you a most important charge; at your hands will he require their souls over whom he hath placed you. Strive, therefore, faithfully to discharge the momentous obligation. Are you sensible of weakness and infirmity? apply then unto GOD for grace and strength. Intreat of him to instruct your mind by the influences of his HOLY SPIRIT; thus will you be duly qualified to instruct others. Ask the support of his Almighty arm; thus will you be enabled, by a consistent conduct, to enforce the precepts you inculcate. He hath promised, that those who "ask shall receive," and he will not fail to accomplish his word.

Finally, If you value the eternal happiness of your offspring;—if you desire to promote the prosperity of your country;—if you are emulous of your own improvement in practical godliness;—be it your constant study to "Train up your children in the way they should go, and when they are old they will not depart from it."







## LECTURE II.

---

ST. JOHN, chap. i. verse 12.

*But as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of GOD, even to them that believe on his name.*

THE gospel of CHRIST is a dispensation of blessings, wholly unmerited on the part of mankind. As sinners, they justly deserve condemnation; and such is their natural imbecillity, that they cannot deliver themselves from this awful state. Yet what man, through weakness and depravity, could not accomplish, that hath GOD wrought for him? For he hath abolished death, and brought to light life and immortality. He hath devised and carried into effect a most astonishing plan, for the redemption of sinners; and for ever blessed be his name, that scheme of mercy is fully revealed in the sacred volume. Here we are taught, that the SON of GOD assumed our nature: the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the FATHER, full of grace and truth.\* The LORD JESUS assumed our nature, that he might make an atonement

\* \* St. John, chap. 1. ver. 14.

for sin, and introduce everlasting righteousness. These gracious purposes he hath fulfilled; "he was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification." "By one offering, he hath perfected for ever, them that are sanctified." Having redeemed his people, and made a way for their reconciliation with GOD, the ALMIGHTY SAVIOUR confers upon their souls the blessings he purchased. He brings them into the actual enjoyment of the most inestimable privileges: "For as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of GOD, even to them that believe on his name." O glorious gift! invaluable blessing! Bestow it, we pray thee, upon our souls, O LORD! We shall consider the subject by an attempt to investigate the following particulars:

First, We shall contemplate the great *purchaser* and *giver* of every spiritual blessing; the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Second, We shall endeavour to shew what it is to receive him.

Third, We shall consider the privileges which the REDEEMER confers upon those who are enabled to receive him.

May the LORD GOD enlighten our minds, and animate our hearts by the influences of his divine



SPIRIT; that our meditations may be profitable to ourselves, and acceptable in his sight!

First, We are to contemplate the great *purchaser* and *giver* of every spiritual blessing, the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

It is utterly impossible that any man should do justice to this part of our subject. It is high as heaven; what can we do? Deeper than hell; what can we know? Yet we are not therefore to refrain from the contemplation thereof. The glories of IMMANUEL are so far revealed in holy scripture, that we may behold, admire, and love him. By that sacred light of truth let us, with humility and diffidence, attempt to trace them. The REDEEMER is here revealed to us as GOD. The prophet saith, "his name shall be called, WONDERFUL, COUNSELLOR, the mighty GOD, the everlasting FATHER, the PRINCE of peace."\* The beloved disciple bears the following testimony to the character of his LORD: "In the beginning was the *word*, and the *word* was with GOD, and the *word* was GOD. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made, that was made."† This glorious SAVIOUR, who is GOD over all, blessed for ever, is said, in holy writ, to have been made man. The apostle of the Gentiles saith, "GOD was manifest in the flesh;" and

\* Isa. ch. ix. ver. 6.

† St. John, ch. i. ver. 1, 3.

again, " But when the fulness of the time was come, GOD sent forth his SON, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.\*"

In this divine human person, we behold our REDEEMER. His precious blood was shed for many for the remission of sins. His unsinning obedience to the law of GOD, constitutes the justifying righteousness of his people; and his almighty SPIRIT, by the renewal and sanctification of their hearts, makes them meet to enjoy the heavenly inheritance.

By the power of the LORD JESUS, every spiritual blessing is conferred upon the souls of the *redeemed*. To him are they indebted for whatever they possess of christian grace, whatever they display of true godliness. By his bitter sufferings and death, the LORD CHRIST hath purchased for his people happiness and peace; by his victorious resurrection, he hath overcome death, and opened unto them the gate of everlasting life; by his ever prevalent intercession, their prayers are heard, their praises accepted, and blessings are abundantly poured out upon their souls. "Through *him* they obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." In fine, he is *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and the end; the all in all, unto the believer; and in him all the promises of GOD, are yea, and Amen.

\* Gal. ch. iv. ver 4, 5.

Were his precious name taken from holy scripture it would be a comfortless volume; were his refreshing influences withheld from the souls of his people, they would fade away suddenly like the grass, they would droop, they would die. As all the productions of the vegetable would perish, and darkness cover the face of the whole earth, were the sun blotted out from the firmament of heaven; so, the soul of a believer, separated from CHRIST, who is our life, would be gloomy, cold, and barren. But this shall never occur. The REDEEMER'S love for his people is everlasting. "Though, therefore, their enemies roar, even in the midst of the congregation, and set up their banners for tokens, yet he that sitteth in the heaven shall laugh, the LORD shall have them in derision." Notwithstanding all the puny efforts of their impotent malice, he will carry safely home to glory the whole host of his *redeemed*; for he saith, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."\* And he also hath said, "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."†

Faithfulness and truth are prominent features in

\* St. John, ch. x. ver. 27, 28.

† Jer. ch. xxxii. ver. 40.



our SAVIOUR's character; he will therefore perform all his engagements; and where he hath begun a good work of grace, he will continue, he will complete it, by an admission into the realms of glory. He is the comforter of his people in all afflictions, their support in every season of need; and they shall be "more than conquerors over each opponent, through *him* that hath loved them."

From this view of our dear REDEEMER's grace and glory, imperfect as it is, we see the greatest cause to love and serve him. Oh that "we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the LORD, may be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the *Spirit* of the LORD!"

Second, We are to shew what it is to receive CHRIST.

In the context it is said, "he came unto his own, and his own received him not." He came to his professing people, the Jews, as the substance and end of their ceremonial dispensation. This people were peculiarly his own. He chose them unto himself, above all other nations, to be unto him an inheritance. He brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, with a mighty hand, and an out-stretched arm. He cast out, also, the heathen before them, and established them in that good land which he had promised unto their forefathers. To these, his own people, the LORD came, but they "received him not."

They refused to acknowledge him as the promised MESSIAH, the anointed SAVIOUR. They gave no credence unto his word; and when miracles were wrought, in confirmation of that word, they sought to invalidate their testimony, by blaspheming the power which accomplished them.—They said, “He casteth out devils through Beelzebub, the prince of the devils!”

Hence it appears that to receive CHRIST is to acknowledge him as the promised MESSIAH; the SON of GOD, who should come into the world. This the Jews would not confess. They traduced his character, delivered him up to the Gentiles, and crucified him as an impostor. Thus they filled up the measure of their iniquities, so that wrath came upon them to the uttermost.

The latter clause of our text intimates, that the reception of CHRIST includes somewhat beyond a mere acknowledgment of him in the character of MESSIAH, the sent of GOD. For those who receive *him* are there described as “believing on his name.” To receive CHRIST is therefore to believe on *him*. To acknowledge him as PROPHET, PRIEST, and KING. He is received by the believer as a PROPHET, to instruct him in the way which leadeth unto life; as a PRIEST, to atone for his transgressions, and to plead his cause in the presence of GOD; as a KING, to rule in his heart, to bring every thought into obedience unto *himself*, and to be his defender

against every enemy. It is GOD who enableth men thus to receive CHRIST. Hence the Apostle saith, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the GOD and FATHER of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that CHRIST may dwell in your hearts by faith."\* St. Paul prayeth not merely that the Ephesians should acknowledge the truth of the scripture history of the LORD JESUS; but that by faith they might be enabled to receive *him* as their SAVIOUR; or, in other words, that CHRIST might be *in* them the hope of glory.

Such a reception of JESUS, includes faith in *him* as the person appointed of GOD for the SAVIOUR of sinners. The confession of Martha was, "LORD, I believe that thou art the CHRIST, the SON of GOD, which should come into the world."† Without such a persuasion we shall not receive the SAVIOUR. For we cannot confide the management of our spiritual concerns, the whole conduct of our salvation, to any, except it be to *him* of whose divine mission for that purpose we are previously convinced.

A due reception of CHRIST implies confidence in *him*, as both able and willing to save our souls. If we are not endowed with this sentiment we shall not acknowledge the REDEEMER. For it is not probable that we shall apply for deliverance from sorrow and danger to any person, unless satisfied of his ability

\* Ephes. ch. iii. ver. 14, 15, 17. † St. John, ch. xi. ver. 27.



and good will to grant the desired favor. This is an hard lesson. When oppressed with a deep sense of guilt, and alarmed with the dread of consequent misery we hear of JESUS; we may indeed admit his ability to save; but it is not without a severe conflict that we are enabled to believe his willingness equal to his power. Upon such occasions, unbelief hath many suggestions to offer. It will dispose men to think, that however the REDEEMER is able to save them, yet the malignity and extent of their guilt is so great as to exclude all hope that they shall be received of *him* with mercy and forgiveness. Such fears are best answered by the good promises of GOD. It is written, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; and though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."\* Moreover, the REDEEMER saith, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."† Such words of grace and truth may silence the cavils of unbelief, and encourage the poor sinner in his application unto JESUS, who is able to save, unto the very uttermost, all those who come unto GOD by him. A reception of CHRIST also supposes that we feel our need of his salvation. Many there are who see "no form nor comeliness in the SAVIOUR, that they should desire him." This proceeds from ignorance. While men discover no guilt or sin in themselves, no danger in their state,

\* Is. ch. i. ver. 18.

† St. John, ch. vi. ver. 37.

they behold no excellence in JESUS. But if their eyes are opened, if they are convinced of sin, and find themselves exposed to the just vengeance of an offended GOD; if they find that they have no power to accomplish their own deliverance, then their sentiments will be changed. They will say of JESUS, "*He* is all my salvation, and all my desire;" *he* is the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. Oh! happy shall I be, if he will condescend to become my SAVIOUR, for I now feel that without *him*, I shall be lost for ever.—"LORD save, or I perish!" These sentiments are wrought in the mind by the teaching of the HOLY SPIRIT: and it is said, "that none can come unto CHRIST except the FATHER draw them." If therefore we have been enabled, as our profession intimates, to receive JESUS as our SAVIOUR, we shall say with the grateful psalmist, "Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake."\* Moreover, our conduct will be remarkable for its conformity with the will of GOD, if we have received CHRIST. We shall live to his glory who died for our salvation.—May this be our case!

Third, We are to consider the privileges which the REDEEMER confers upon those who are enabled to receive him.

They are thus described in the text. But as many as received *him*, to them gave he power, or

\* Psalm cxv. ver. 1.

privilege to become the sons of GOD. St. Paul thus addresseth true believers. “Ye are all the children of GOD by faith in CHRIST JESUS.”\* All therefore who are enabled to receive the LORD JESUS CHRIST into their hearts by faith, are made the children of GOD by adoption and grace. Their privileges are enumerated in that part of our catechism we are now to consider. “My godfathers and godmothers, in my baptism, wherein I was made a member of CHRIST, a child of GOD, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.” Sponsors are required by the church of England at the baptism of infants, as securities for their religious education. And, surely too great care cannot be taken, that youth may be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the LORD. Sponsors in baptism, were admitted by the church as early as the second century.† So that the practice hath at least the stamp of antiquity; nor do we know of any just cause for its discontinuance. We have already endeavored to explain the former part of this answer, which refers to baptism, as an introduction unto the privileges here mentioned.‡ It will readily be admitted, that all who truly receive CHRIST, are baptised with the HOLY GHOST according to his promise: and we hope to make it appear, from the testimony of Holy Writ, that they are “members of CHRIST, children of GOD, and inheri-

\* Gal. ch. iii. ver. 26.      † Brown's Church History.

‡ See Lecture I.



tors of the kingdom of heaven." They are members of CHRIST. They are united to him by a true and lively faith. They are described as cut out of the olive-tree which is wild by nature, and grafted contrary to nature in a good olive-tree.\* They are grafted into CHRIST, the true and living vine, from whom their life and fertility are derived. He is the root by which they are borne and nourished. St. Paul advances this truth as the greatest incentive to purity of life and manners. He saith, "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of CHRIST? Shall I then take the members of CHRIST, and make them the members of an harlot? GOD forbid!†"

\* Those who by divine grace are made members of CHRIST, will adopt the same language with respect to all sin. As the root is holy so shall the branches also be made holy. The influences which we derive from CHRIST, our glorious head, are of a sanctifying nature; and the more we experience of them, the greater will be our advancement in holiness. They are children of GOD. This appellation is not applied to believers, merely as a title for distinction sake; nor are they so called because they were created and are supported by the power of GOD. It is applied to them in a most endearing point of view, and is descriptive of their real state. They have been new created by the *spirit* of GOD in CHRIST JESUS unto good works. Hence they are called the sons of GOD: and it is said,

\* Rom. ch. xi. ver. 24.

† 2 Cor. ch. vi. v. 15.

“That they were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of GOD.” He alone can thus be called the child of GOD who is regenerate, and born again of the Holy Spirit. Hence it is said, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of GOD.”\* All who are thus converted are children of GOD. “They are born again not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, by the word of GOD which liveth and abideth for ever.” How consolatory to the believer is this truth. In the contemplation thereof he may find support in every time of need; he may reason thus: “As I am through grace a child of GOD, my condition is secure and happy. The afflictions I experience are the needful trials of my faith and patience; they are also demonstrations of my heavenly parent’s love. For I read, whom the LORD loveth he chasteneth; if ye endure chastisement GOD dealeth with you as sons. And I am taught, “That all things shall work together for good to them that love GOD, and are called according to his eternal purpose.” The evidence of sonship is found in the believer’s heart. For it is written, “because ye are sons, GOD hath sent forth the *spirit* of his *son* into your hearts, crying ABBA FATHER.”† Happy are they in whom the Spirit of GOD bears this testimony. They are indeed members of CHRIST and children of GOD, but

\* St. John, ch. iii. ver. 5.      † Gal. ch. iv. ver. 6.

not otherwise; "for if any man have not the SPIRIT of CHRIST, he is none of his." Those who are enabled to receive the LORD JESUS into their hearts by faith, are also "inheritors of the kingdom of heaven." Hence the Apostle saith, "Thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of GOD through CHRIST."\* It is also affirmed of the children of GOD, that they are begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of JESUS CHRIST from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them.†

The Christian is born to titles, and an estate. Not, however, to the fading honors or transitory possessions of the present world. No, he hath a better inheritance; he is born a "king and a priest unto GOD," an heir of eternal glory. The heir to an estate derives support and comfort therefrom, even during his minority. So it fares with the child of GOD. While an inhabitant of this world he is a minor. He is now a son of GOD, "and it doth not yet appear what he shall be." In this his minority, however, he enjoyeth, through the goodness of his heavenly FATHER, a large and soul-reviving foretaste of that glory and peace which await him. Hence, St. Peter beautifully saith unto such, "Whom having not seen ye love, in whom, though now ye see

\* Gal. chap. iv. ver. 7.

† 1 Pet. chap. 1. ver. 3, 4.



him not, yet believing, ye rejoice, with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."\* How greatly superior is the heavenly inheritance to all sublunary treasures! Sin hath tarnished and embittered all temporal enjoyment. Not more fleet is the passing wind, than the possession of worldly things. Riches take to themselves wings and flee away. The pestiferous breath of envy sullies the brightest honor, and like the fatal canker, destroys reputation. While death stands ready for ever to separate us from terrestrial objects. But the treasure laid up in heaven, for the redeemed of the LORD, is subject to none of these vicissitudes. There "neither moth nor rust do corrupt, nor do thieves break through and steal." Happy are those whom GOD hath made inheritors of the kingdom of heaven! They find in the prospect of future glory, comfort and support under all the evils of this mortal life. They can say with the Apostle, "Our present light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." They now, indeed, "see through a glass darkly," ere long, they shall see "face to face."

When faith is in exercise, so that the believer can ascertain his right to the heavenly inheritance

\* 1 Peter, chap. 1. ver. 8, 9.

in CHRIST JESUS, his soul is filled with comfort and joy. He then saith,

“ When I can read my title clear  
To mansions in the skies.  
I bid farewell to ev’ry fear,  
And wipe my weeping eyes.\*

Ere long, this blessed hope will give place to perpetual enjoyment. The heirs of glory will be called home. Then shall they experience that fulness of joy, which is the presence of GOD; they shall drink of those rivers of pleasure which flow at his right hand for evermore.

Such are the exclusive privileges of those who are enabled to receive the LORD JESUS CHRIST. They are “ members of CHRIST, children of GOD, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven.”

“ With them, number’d may we be,  
Here, and in eternity.”

The truth which hath been advanced may be applied to the consolation and support of the LORD’S children. All their evils are temporary; their sorrows will soon terminate; beyond this vale of tears, there is a “ land of pure delight,” where they shall live for ever. Let the prospect of future blessedness,

\* Dr. Watts.

alleviate present calamity, and ever remember, that GOD doeth “all things well.” This glorious hope should excite in the believer a diligent exertion to glorify his REDEEMER. It is written, “Whosoever hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as he is pure.” Those who possess so exalted an expectation, should rise above the idle concerns and vain pursuits of a world which lieth in the wicked one. They should be singular in the purity of their lives and deportment. Oh that all were such! May those upon whom the name of CHRIST is named, depart from iniquity.

From what hath been said, we may also infer, that a reception of CHRIST is absolutely needful, as a preparation for the enjoyment of gospel privileges. The privilege of becoming sons of GOD is said in the text, to be conferred only upon such as received CHRIST. A profession of the gospel will not bring to our souls the blessings thereof. In order to this, our hearts must be renewed. Satan must be dethroned, must be cast out, and the SON of GOD take possession thereof. This change can only be wrought in us by the power of GOD. He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, must shine in our hearts, ere we can behold the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of JESUS CHRIST. All those who would enjoy the privilege, must thus seek it. In the use of the appointed means, it shall be obtained; without that, it cannot be expected.



“ Ask, therefore, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.”

Lastly, from what hath been advanced, we may observe, that all who are enabled to receive CHRIST by faith, being thus made sons of GOD, shall, in due time, be admitted to the enjoyment of the heavenly inheritance. St. Paul saith, “ I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth, there is laid up for me, a crown of righteousness, which the LORD, the righteous *Judge*, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but to all them also, that love his appearing.”\* The LORD knoweth them that are his, and he will preserve them for ever.

As the reception of CHRIST is the first step to the attainment of honor and glory, and immortality; so the rejection of *him* exposes the soul to the danger of eternal misery. No consideration should prevail on us to adopt so ruinous a conduct. Why should we destroy ourselves? Why should we refuse the good, and choose the evil? Let us not act so condemnably. Be this our daily prayer, O blessed JESUS, may it please thee to open mine heart, that in receiving thyself, I may be made a member of CHRIST, a child of GOD, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven; even so. Amen.

\* 2 Timothy, chap. iv. ver. 7, 8,



## LECTURE III.

ROMANS, chap. xii. verse 2.

*Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of GOD.*

**I**N our last Lecture, we contemplated the glorious privileges which are conferred upon the children of GOD, by the free grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. Our present will be occupied by reflections upon the nature and extent of that duty which they owe unto their heavenly FATHER; to the performance of which they will be excited by the contemplation of his unmerited goodness. In the accomplishment of this purpose, we shall find it necessary to investigate that part of our Catechism which thus describes the baptismal vow. “They did promise and vow three things in my name; First, that I should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh; Secondly, that I should believe all the articles of the Christian faith; And thirdly, that I should keep GOD’s holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life.”

An experimental acquaintance with the power and grace of the gospel will dispose the mind to perform this sacred engagement. We find that the sacred writers generally enforce practical godliness, upon no other motives than such as spring from the goodness and love of GOD. We observe this in the context, where the Apostle thus speaketh, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of GOD, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to GOD, which is your reasonable service." I beseech you *by the mercies of GOD*. Every heart must feel such an address; it will excite all the love and activity of a believer. He is required not merely to profess, or in some particular instances display, obedience to the will of the LORD, but all the faculties of his mind; all the powers of his body must be devoted to the glory of GOD, which is no more than his reasonable service. For, if GOD hath, by an act of sovereign and free grace, redeemed our bodies and souls from the pit of destruction, it is certainly "reasonable" that they should be given up to him. The text is a continuation of the same affectionate address; it may be considered as explanatory thereof. "And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of GOD." They, who through grace, comply with this divine mandate, will present their bodies "a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to GOD." The text, indeed, compriseth



the whole duty of a *christian*, and likewise reveals what end he should propose to himself for his encouragement, while in the strength of GOD he endeavours to perform his duty aright. In considering the truths contained in this portion of holy writ, we shall adopt the following method.

First, We shall consider the important duty which GOD requires of his children. "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."

Secondly, We shall contemplate that object which a believer should keep in view, while he endeavours, by the help of GOD to perform his duty. "That ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of GOD."

Having explained these particulars, we shall close with a few observations upon the whole subject. May the GOD and FATHER of our LORD JESUS CHRIST bless what shall be advanced, to the good of every soul!

First, We are to consider the important duty which GOD requires of his children. "Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds."

In contemplating this part of the subject, we

shall adopt the plan which the Apostle hath laid down in our text. He hath here described the duty of a believer as consisting of two parts.

First, An abstinence from the very appearance of evil, expressed in those words, “ be not conformed to this world.”

Second, A diligent attention to the putting on of the new man, which, after GOD, is created in righteousness and true holiness: “ be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds.”

We are then to contemplate the service which the LORD requires of his people, as including 1st. An abstinence from the very appearance of evil, expressed in those words, “ be not conformed to this world.” By *this world* we are to understand the unregenerate sinful inhabitants of the earth. They are called *this world*, to express their numbers. It is to be feared, that were a separation made between them and the people of GOD, they would constitute a very great majority. Our blessed LORD saith, “ Wide is the gate, and broad is the way which leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.”\* They are, likewise, so described to denote that all their views and dispositions are “ earthly, sensual, devilish.” Between the chil-

\* St. Matt. chap. 7. ver. 13.

dren of GOD and such characters, no conformity or resemblance should be found. The blessed Apostle saith, "Put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts."\* This scripture reminds us of the Catechism, which, in this respect, gives the following account of a believer's duty: "That he should renounce the devil, and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh." To renounce these shings, is, by the help of GOD, so to forsake and detest that we shall neither follow nor be led by them. Let us contemplate these things.

First, We are required, as believers, to renounce the devil and all his works. The works of the devil are those actions of which he is the promoter; every sinful thought, and word, and deed. It is written, "he that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the SON of GOD was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."† By nature we are all of that wicked one; and his works are manifested in us. The scripture saith of all unconverted characters, that they "walk according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air; the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience."‡

\* Eph. chap. 4. ver. 22.

† 1 John, chap. 3. ver. 8.

‡ Eph. chap. 2. ver. 2.



If we are truly converted characters; if CHRIST, the hope of glory, is revealed in our hearts, we shall be delivered from the power and malice of Satan: we shall renounce his works. The love of sin will be destroyed within us, and we shall therefore refrain from its crooked paths. It is written, “but now being made free from sin; that is, with respect to its guilt, love, and power in the soul, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.”\* Such persons must of necessity, “renounce the devil and all his works”. For as the law of GOD is written in their hearts, so the effect of that law will be displayed in their life and conversation.

The christian is likewise required to “renounce the pomps and vanities of this wicked world.”

Our blessed LORD saith, “My kingdom is not of this world;”† and he thus addressed his disciples, “In this world ye shall have tribulation.”‡ The condition of a believer in this respect, is much the same now as heretofore. He serves a different master, his affections are placed upon other objects, and his treasure is remote from earth; the world, therefore, is sure to be his enemy. It will endeavour, either to drive him from the path of duty by persecutions, or allure him by deceitful smiles. As such is the case,

\* Rom. chap. vi. ver. 22.    † St. John, chap. xviii. ver. 36.

‡ St. John, chap. xvi. ver. 33.

a christian, for his own sake, should renounce its pomps and vanity. They are snares, artfully laid, to entrap the soul; the child of GOD, therefore, should not in these respects, "be conformed to this world." A great reason why many modern professors, they must not be called believers, are so inanimate and barren, is conformity to this sinful world. Their amusements, their dwellings, their manners, are much the same, as prevail among those who do not profess religion.

So liberal are their sentiments, so expanded are their minds, that they perceive no difficulty in uniting GOD and Mammon. They judge it right to serve both. Yea, so accurate is their discrimination, that they can tell how far conformity to the world may be safe and prudent; so great their politeness, that they would not, upon any account, by an unnecessary strictness in things indifferent, either cast a gloom upon social intercourse, or appear singular and precise in their deportment. They are well described by an excellent writer.

" Renounce the world, the preacher cries.  
We do, a multitude replies.  
While one, as innocent, regards  
A snug and friendly game at cards;  
And one, whatever you may say,  
Can see no evil in a play:  
Some love a concert, or a race,  
And others, shooting, and the chase."\*

\* Cowper.

It is not, however, by ironical language, that so wicked a conduct must be reprov'd. We remind you of your baptismal vow, which, by confirmation, you have ratified. This engages you to renounce the world, with its pomps and vanity. It is an engagement which stands recorded in heaven. It is written, "When thou shalt vow a vow unto the LORD thy GOD, thou shalt not slack to pay it; for the LORD thy GOD will surely require it of thee, and it would be sin in thee."\* Know that the LORD will by no means clear the guilty; if, therefore, conscience reproaches you with the violation of your baptismal vow, you have great cause for apprehension and sorrow. We shall only observe upon this part of our subject, that if we have not religion enough within us, to occasion what the world will represent as great singularity of manners and deportment, there is reason to fear that it will prove insufficient as a preparation for heaven. And if GOD hath, indeed, converted our souls, and given us a treasure in heaven, we shall consider all the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, as splendid trifles, and therefore unworthy our regard.

Believers are, likewise, engaged to renounce all the sinful lusts of the flesh; that is, all those corrupt desires which spring from our depraved nature, and are contrary to the revealed will of GOD.

\* Deut. ch. xxiii. ver. 21.



Every real christian is inlisted under the banners of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and therefore he is bound to oppose all his enemies; particularly those evil propensities of his own heart, to gratify which is rebellion against GOD. It is written, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."\* The child of GOD is not hereby debarred from the enjoyment either of the necessities or comforts of life. He is taught, that "every creature of GOD is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified, by the word of GOD and prayer."† Yet is such an one required to deny sinful self; to strive, by the help of GOD, that he may vanquish lust and corruption; that he may sustain, with lowly resignation, the cross which the LORD shall lay upon him, and constantly imitate the blessed JESUS, who is the AUTHOR, and FINISHER of our faith.

These particulars are included in what we consider as the first branch of CHRISTIAN duty; an abstinence from the very appearance of evil, required in those words, "Be not conformed to this world."

We proceed to contemplate another particular, included in this part of our discourse, as the duty of a believer.

\* St. Matt. ch. xvi. ver. 24.

† 1 Tim. ch. iv. ver. 4, 5.

A diligent attention to the putting on of the new man, which, after GOD, is created in righteousness and true holiness, thus declared in the text, "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." This command doth not imply that man is able to renew, or to convert, his own mind. He can as soon raise the dead, as change his own heart. We must, therefore, rather understand this precept as requiring the diligent use of those means which GOD hath appointed for the attainment of so desirable an object. Our Catechism will assist us in the contemplation of this truth. It represents the professor as required to "believe all the articles of the Christian faith, to keep GOD's holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of his life." These things are included in the apostolical command, "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." For no converted person is destitute of faith, and every true believer, will be "careful to maintain good works." To believe all the articles of the christian faith is not merely to assent unto them, with the understanding, as things which may possibly be true; but it is the acknowledgment thereof in the heart, as truths intimately connected with our present and eternal welfare. It is written, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness."\* Such a faith is the gift of GOD. "Unto us," saith the Apostle, "it is given to believe on him."†

\* Rom. ch. x. ver. 10.

† Philip. ch. i. ver. 29.

To keep GOD's holy will and commandments, is to make them the rule of our life ; to endeavour that our conduct and dispositions may be conformable unto them. This we cannot accomplish of ourselves ; yet it is said in holy scripture, " work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is GOD that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."\* A true believer hath a will to desire and chuse that which is right, because GOD hath wrought it in him. He hath power to accomplish the good thing he willeth, because the LORD is with him guiding his feet into the way of his commandments.—The man who by divine grace hath thus attained unto faith and holiness is " transformed by the renewing of his mind."

This transformation, and renewal, must be sought in a diligent use of the means of grace. We must seek it by hearing and reading the good word of GOD ; by self-examination, with fervent prayer to GOD, that his SPIRIT may be given to create our souls anew in the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Thus sought, it shall be obtained, for faithful is he that hath promised.

Second, We are to contemplate that end which the believer should keep in view, while he endeavors, by the help of GOD, to perform his duty. " That

\* Philip. ch. ii. ver. 12, 13.



ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of GOD."

The child of GOD earnestly desires to increase in the knowledge and love of his heavenly FATHER. He thirsts for more frequent manifestations of his reconciled countenance, for clearer views of his duty, for greater strength and inclination to perform that duty aright. These will most probably be attained in a life of devotedness unto GOD. It is written, "Them that honour me, I will honour; and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed."\* And again, "Then shall we know if we follow on to know the LORD."† The path of duty leads to instruction and comfort, but those who depart therefrom shall have darkness, and sorrow of heart.

By the "will of GOD," we are to understand the holy scriptures, especially that part of them which refers to the dispensation of the glorious gospel. This "will of GOD," is described as "good, acceptable, and perfect." It is called "good." This may denote its native excellence, its inherent rectitude. It is altogether consistent with the character of JEHOVAH. Hereby he is "just, and the justifier of him that believeth in JESUS."‡ It is "good," as it hath respect unto ourselves. It amply provides for all

\* 1 Sam. ch. ii. ver. 30. † Hos. ch. vi. ver. 3.

‡ Rom. ch. iii. ver. 26.

our spiritual wants, and secures our improvement in every good way, and word, and work. It is "acceptable" to GOD. It makes a complete satisfaction to his offended justice, and vindicates the honour of his violated law. It is, therefore, said of JESUS, by whom it was carried into effect, "The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honourable."\* It is also "acceptable" to GOD, as most effectually ensuring the future obedience of its faithful votaries. It secures this, not so much by the severity of its regulations, as by its transforming influences upon the heart. This is the "will of GOD, even our sanctification." If we are sanctified, we can say with the Apostle, "I delight in the law of GOD, after the inward man."† It should be "acceptable" unto ourselves; because it proposes the only remedy for our sin and misery. "There is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved."‡ This remedy is complete; "for the gospel is the power of GOD unto salvation to every one that believeth."§ It is "perfect," so that thereunto no addition can be made. It is well ordered in all things and sure. The last words of our dying IMMANUEL were, "It is finished." Believer, thou mayest rejoice in the glad tidings. "Finished," is that atonement which procures for thee the pardon of all thy transgressions.

\* Isa. ch. xlii. ver. 21.

† Rom. ch. vii. ver. 22.

‡ Acts, ch. iv. ver. 12.

§ Rom. ch. i. ver. 16.

“Finished,” is that robe of completely perfect righteousness, arrayed in which thy soul shall stand accepted before GOD. Redemption’s glorious work is “perfect.” The LORD JESUS CHRIST, in his own dear person, hath “finished” it; for he “was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.”\* How glorious is the gospel: It is “good, acceptable, and perfect!” Thanks be to GOD for his unspeakable gift!

To prove this “good, and acceptable, and perfect will of GOD,” is, by divine grace, to experience its renewing energy, to rejoice in its holy comfort, and to display its sanctifying influences.

To this valuable knowledge, the believer is directed to look for his encouragement in the way of duty. To such it is said, “Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of GOD.” That you may see its close connexion with your real welfare; rejoice in its sweetly consoling truth, and firmly confide in its never failing efficacy to secure your eternal peace. For it is not the will of your heavenly FATHER, that one of his little ones should perish. Those who, by divine grace, are preserved in the right way, shall thus prove the “good, and accept-

\* Rom. ch. iv. ver. 25.



able, and perfect will of GOD." How consolatory, how supporting to the believing soul are such reflections. He may say, "I experience many difficulties in the way of duty; I meet with sorrow where I expected comfort; the world opposeth me, and my treacherous heart perversely pleads its cause. All, however, shall be well. My GOD will manifest himself unto me in the way of his gracious appointment. He will say unto my soul, "I am thy salvation. He will permit me to taste the sweetness of his love, to rejoice in the comfort of his presence, and more fully to prove his good, and acceptable, and perfect will. Therefore my soul wait thou upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee, nor will he suffer thy foot to slip."

We are to conclude with a few observations upon the whole subject.

First, Let us observe that every real christian is a converted character; is transformed by the renewing of his mind. He is not merely altered by a change of religious sentiment, or the adoption of a pharisaical, instead of an openly profane conduct. He is really changed by the renewing of his mind; he is brought from darkness to light, translated from the kingdom of Satan, into that of GOD'S dear SON, by the powerful influences of his HOLY SPIRIT. It becomes every man to enquire respecting his own condition in this particular; let each ask himself, Am

I converted? Am I brought from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of GOD. We admonish them, that the most ostentatious profession of godliness, without an experimental acquaintance with the converting grace of the gospel is of no avail. It is written, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."\* Your salvation then is the object of present concern: be not careless in a matter of such infinite importance. Cry unto GOD, in the name of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, that he may be pleased to transform you, by the renewing of your mind, so that while you hold the form of godliness, your hearts may experience its power.

Second, We observe that a real Christian is what the world will account a singular character.

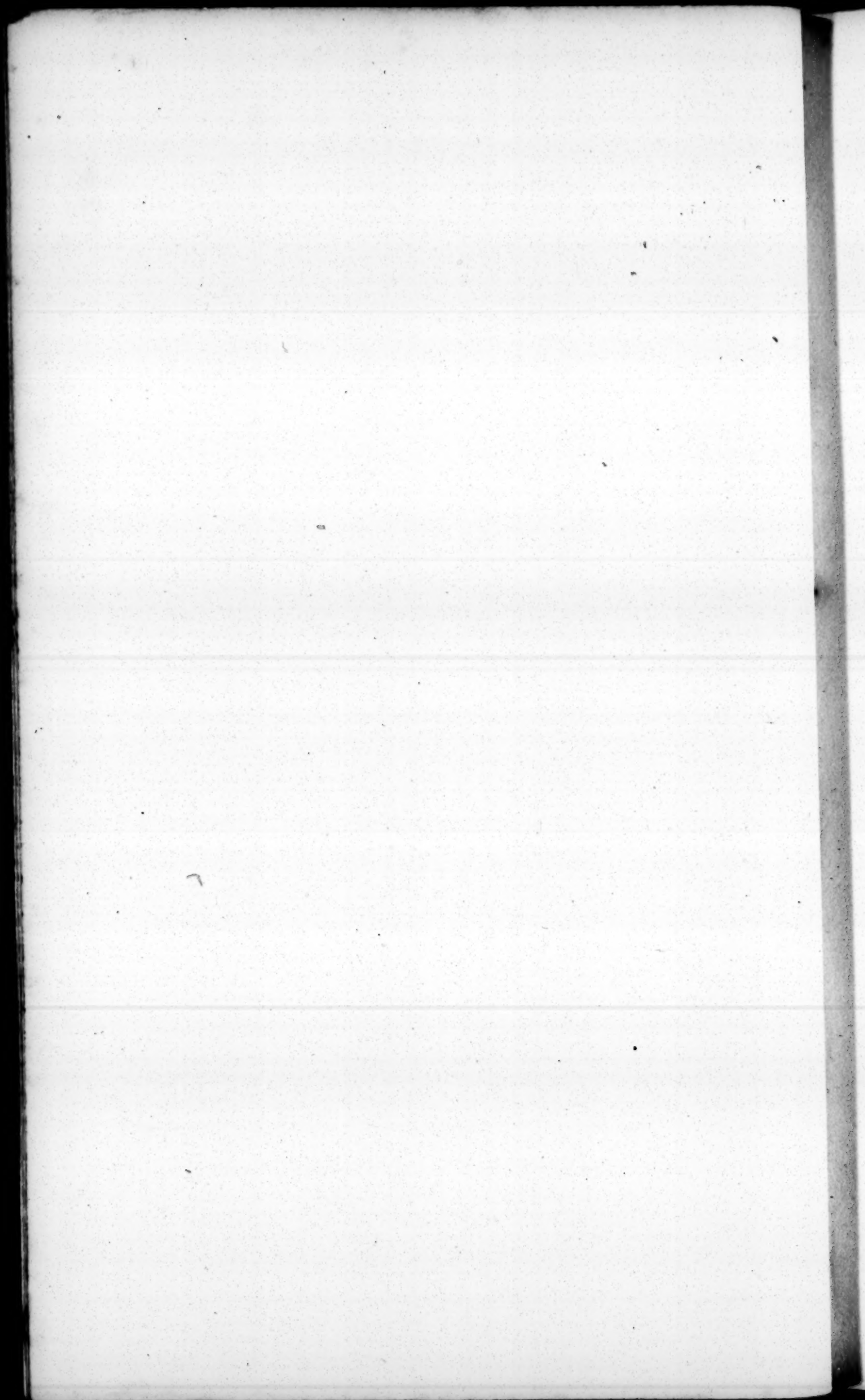
He hath an holy aversion to its sinful ways and customs; and therefore he conforms to none of them. From the holiness of his life and manners, so utterly different from that of worldly men, they will take occasion to reproach him "as righteous over much;" as unnecessarily rigid in his sentiments, over precise in his conduct. Would to GOD that there were more frequent and just occasion for such reproaches! They are the greatest honour which can be conferred upon a believer. They afford the most irrefragable

\* St. Matt. ch. xviii. v. 3.

testimony to the uprightness and purity of his life. Are we such characters? Doth the world take knowledge of us, that we have been with JESUS? Have we renounced the pomps and vanities of this wicked world? Do we keep GOD's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same from day to day? May this be our case.

Third, We observe that the true believer is an highly privileged and favored character. Unto him it is given to know the good and acceptable, and perfect will of GOD. This knowledge brings with it the enjoyment of every needful blessing for time and eternity. Where it is vouchsafed, there is peace with GOD; a well grounded hope of support in every time of trial, and a certain expectation of immortal glory. Let us examine ourselves, whether we possess this blessed knowledge. If we do, happy and secure is our state; if not, we have every thing to apprehend. Let us seek after these things ere it be too late. This is the acceptable time, this the day of salvation. Let us, therefore, seek the LORD while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near: "May GOD in tender mercy so transform us, by the renewing of our minds, that we may henceforth renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh." May he give us grace to believe all the articles of the christian faith, to keep his holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of our life!





## LECTURE IV.

HEBREWS, chap. x. ver. 23.

*Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised.*

IN the primitive ages of christianity there were, many who adopted the profession of the gospel while they continued destitute of the love and power of godliness. They assumed an appearance of religion as a covering of deceit for the more easy accomplishment of their wicked purposes. They are thus described by our blessed LORD. "Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers." This race is not extinct; for at this day we find their descendants among us. A steadfast adherence to the profession of the faith, is not to be expected from such persons. We read in holy scripture, of many who for a season ran well; and yet after a time fell away, nor returned again to the ways of religion. St. Paul saith, "That Demas had forsaken him, having loved this present world."\* St. Peter also reproveth some, whom he describeth as cursed children, which have forsaken the right way, and are gone

\* Tim. ch. iv. ver. 10.

astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness.\* We must not conclude from such occurrences, that all who adopt the profession of the gospel, are liable to the same miscarriage. Our blessed LORD hath predicted such instances of apostacy, and likewise explained the causes whence they proceed. He saith, "He that receiveth the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it, yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." He also that received the seed among the thorns, is he that heareth the word, and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.† We learn from such facts, that the state of a mere professor is precarious and insecure. Such indeed frequently separate themselves from the people of GOD. While the profession thereof exposes them to no inconvenience they are apparently well-disposed towards religion; otherwise they know her not. A little contempt and reproach will drive them away. The Apostle saith, "They went out from us, but they were not of us: they had a name to live, but were found dead before GOD. Had their souls been converted, their profession would have remained unshaken. For it is added, if they had been of us, they would no doubt have

\* 2 Pet. ch. ii. ver. 14, 15. † St. Matt, ch. xiii. ver. 20, 21, 22.



continued with us, but they went out from us that they might be made manifest, that they were not all of us.\*

To prevent, as much as possible, such instances of defection from the faith, St. Paul, under the direction of the HOLY SPIRIT, hath left upon record the injunction contained in the text: "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, for he is faithful that promised." There is an evident connexion between these words and that part of the Catechism which will be the subject of our present Lecture. "Yes, verily, and by GOD's help so I will, and I heartily thank our heavenly father that he hath called me unto this state of salvation through JESUS CHRIST OUR SAVIOUR, and pray unto GOD, that he will give me his grace, that I may continue in the same unto my life's end." This is no more than a declaration that we will, by the divine assistance, comply with St. Paul's exhortation. As we are engaged to abide by what is here said, it is necessary that we should rightly understand its import, in order that we may learn the nature and extent of our obligation. We shall, therefore, contemplate the subject in the following manner.

First, We shall enquire wherein consists, "the profession of our faith."

\* 1 John, ch. ii. ver. 19.

Second, We will explain what it is to hold fast that profession.

Third, We will meditate upon that affecting consideration which the Apostle introduceth to enforce steadfastness in the faith. "He is faithful that promised."

May the LORD give us wisdom to speak, and hear as we ought, upon subjects of such infinite importance!

First, We are to enquire wherein the profession of our faith consists. Christian faith may be defined as an assent of the heart unto the truths of GOD. Not merely an assent of the understanding, for that we may give and yet reap no benefit therefrom. The sentiments which we entertain as mere matter of opinion, will neither affect our hearts, nor influence our lives. This, therefore, cannot be the faith of the gospel. No; it is such an assent of the heart unto that divine system, as proceeds from the teaching of the HOLY SPIRIT. A man who believes CHRIST as the SAVIOUR of sinners, can, in some measure, say, "I know him as my SAVIOUR." He hath delivered my soul from the guilt and power of sin; and the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the son of GOD, who loved me, and gave himself for me. In holy writ this faith is described as the gift of GOD. Saith the Apostle, "For unto you it is

given on the behalf of CHRIST to believe on his name."\* By this faith the children of GOD are said to be justified. It is written, "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with GOD."† We are not hence to conclude that faith is the meritorious cause of salvation. No; the scripture reveals no other way of deliverance from sin with its attendant miseries, or of acceptance with GOD, than the LORD JESUS CHRIST, the great end of the law for righteousness, unto every one that believeth." Faith is no more than the instrument whereby the salvation of the gospel is conveyed unto the soul. In this view alone, St. Paul saith, "We are justified by faith." This grace purifieth the heart. It is a powerful and active principle; "it energizeth by love." The true believer is said, by our Catechism, to be in a state of salvation. A state of reconciliation and favor with GOD into which he was called by *him*, through our LORD JESUS CHRIST. The profession of this faith is an outward acknowledgment thereof before GOD and man. Not merely a verbal confession. This may be made without a belief of the heart in JESUS. Many who in words profess to know the SAVIOUR, do nevertheless in works deny him. We read of some who hold the truth in unrighteousness.‡ It will readily be granted, that this cannot be the profession required by the text. This respects the life, the con-

\*Philip, ch. i. ver. 29.      † Rom. ch. v. ver. 1.

‡ Rom. ch. i. ver. 18.



duct, and the conversation. It is by these rather than words, that a "profession of the faith" should be made. Good works are indeed represented, and enforced, in the sacred writings, as the fruit and evidence of genuine faith. It is said, "Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." Faith, without works, is a mere speculative and lifeless opinion. If we have no evidence to support the reality of our faith, except our single affirmation, we shall obtain little credit; but where men can evidently behold the effect, they will admit the existence of the cause. "Thou believest that there is one GOD; thou dost well. The devils also believe and tremble." Thou acknowledgest the one supreme GOD, the CREATOR, and SUPPORTER, of all things. So far as thine opinion extends, it is right. But the devils possess the same faith; yea, they tremble, knowing that by GOD they are reserved in chains, under darkness, against the judgment of the great day. In this respect, their sentiment is more accurate than that of their children, unconverted men. "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?" Was not the reality of his faith displayed by the excellent fruits it produced? "Seest thou how faith wrought with his works;" was a lively, an active principle, which produced in his conduct an holy

obedience to the will of GOD? "And by works was faith made perfect;" complete in its effects and consequences. "And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed GOD, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness; and he was called the Friend of GOD."\*

The profession of the faith may then be described as a conformity of the life and manners unto the revealed will of GOD. This, let me affirm, is the most proper and satisfactory evidence that our hearts are purified by faith, which is in CHRIST JESUS. A real christian will "let his light so shine before men, that they may see his good works, and glorify his FATHER which is in heaven."† Do we thus profess our most holy faith? May GOD so sanctify our souls, by faith, that our whole life may be a continued profession thereof.

Second, We are to explain, what it is to "hold fast this profession of our faith without wavering."

An unsanctified man, be his profession what it may, is ever wavering and unstable, both in faith and practice. Hence, many who for a time "ran well," forsake the truth. They either adopt the most blasphemous sentiments, or become as remarkable for the depravity of their life and manners, as they formerly

\* St. James, ch. ii. ver. 17 to 23. † St. Matt. ch. v. ver. 16.

were for their affected severity of deportment. A true believer is not such; the Apostle saith, "We are not of them that draw back unto perdition."

The grace of GOD within the saint, is a steady and uniform principle, whereby he is supported in the profession of the faith. He holds it "fast." Let the world smile or frown, he regards it not. Let his spiritual enemies oppose his progress, let them adopt every means to seduce him from CHRIST, he is not thereby moved. He saith, To whom shall I go? He hath the words of eternal life. Why should I forsake this kind and constant friend? Upon *him* all my hopes are fixed; from *him* I derive every needful blessing; and *he* will keep me by *his* mighty power, through faith, unto salvation. Let me never be found capable of deserting *him* who hath said, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

Such an one "holds fast the profession of the faith without wavering." He is not tossed about by every wind of doctrine, nor led aside by the artifice of men, who lay in wait to deceive. Nor is he among those, who crying "Lo here, and Lo there," are attracted by every sound of novelty. He is happy there to attend, where, under the glad voice of the gospel, he enjoyeth the manifestations of his REDEEMER'S love. The language of his heart is, "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of thee."



“ While in words he professeth to know GOD, he doth not in works deny him.” He doth not, by an unholy conduct, give unto the enemies of the LORD occasion to blaspheme.

From this view of the *christian* character, we shall perceive, that to “ hold fast the profession of the faith,” includes a steadfastness of heart in adhering to the truth as it is in JESUS; a constant purity of life, that we may adorn the doctrine of GOD our SAVIOUR. Would to GOD that all who assume the christian name, were thus regular in supporting the character! But alas! how many there are, who have, indeed, a name to live, while they are dead before GOD. Such may finally apostatize from their profession. The true believer, however, cannot, shall not, fall away. He is assured of perseverance by the promise of his LORD. He saith, “ Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.”\* The will of CHRIST must be accomplished; therefore his people, being made “ faithful unto death, shall receive a crown of life.” GOD began the good work in them, by the conversion of their souls; he continues it by granting them grace, to help in every time of need; he will also complete it, by administering unto them an

\* St. John, ch. xvii. ver. 24.

abundant entrance into his kingdom and glory. How secure is then the condition of the *redeemed*. They, if questioned respecting their adherence to the profession of the faith, can say, "Yes, verily, and by GOD's help so I will." No engagements to holiness, which are made in the strength of GOD, can be too great. The believer can do all things through CHRIST who strengtheneth him. Supported by HIS ALMIGHTY ARM, no undertaking will prove too difficult; without *him*, not any thing can be accomplished.

The child of GOD can also adopt the subsequent language: "I heartily thank our heavenly FATHER, that he hath called me to this state of salvation, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD." A believer is required to persevere in a "state of salvation;" of deliverance from the guilt of sin, of freedom from its love and power. Into this blessed state he is brought by the effectual working of the divine SPIRIT. Of such, St. Paul saith, "We give thanks unto the FATHER, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear SON."\* He also saith, "As many as are led by the SPIRIT of GOD, they are the sons of GOD."† Let me add, respecting "this state of salvation," it includes fa-

\* Col. ch. i. ver. 12, 13.

† Rom. ch. viii. ver. 14.

vor and reconciliation with GOD. The believer is brought nigh unto GOD through CHRIST JESUS. Because he is a SON, GOD hath sent forth the SPIRIT of his SON, into his heart, crying, "ABBA FATHER." Into this state he is called by the FATHER of mercies. Holy scripture saith of such, they are "called to be saints." But how called? By the preaching of the gospel, which, the power of GOD, makes effectual unto their salvation. The REDEEMER saith, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." The SPIRIT of GOD disposes the soul to obey this blessed invitation; and by his power, regenerates the heart. These mercies are conferred for the sake of JESUS CHRIST. It is therefore written, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the HOLY GHOST, which he shed on us abundantly, through JESUS CHRIST OUR SAVIOUR."\* If the believer can thus profess his determination, by the divine assistance, to maintain the profession of the faith, a sense of his own weakness will certainly incline him to adopt the petition connected therewith. "I pray unto GOD to give me his grace, that I may continue

\* Titus, ch. iii. ver. 5, 6.



in the same unto my life's end." Steadfastness in the "profession of the faith," is not attainable by mere human exertion. Those who would retain their profession without wavering, must seek, by diligent prayer, the assistance of GOD the HOLY SPIRIT. We are, indeed, capable of forsaking GOD, to our own destruction, but we have no strength to retain our allegiance. Hence one prayeth, "Draw me, we will run after thee." Our blessed LORD saith, "Abide in me, and I in you, as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing."\* He who abideth in CHRIST, will "hold fast the profession of the faith without wavering." He will continue stedfast, till he shall arrive at those blessed abodes, where faith is swallowed up in vision; hope lost in the fulness of perpetual enjoyment; and, holy love strikes the enraptured chord, in songs of praises to him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood. Are we emulous of this resolute adherence to the profession of our faith? Let us then seek it by prayer to GOD, thus shall our souls be established.

Third, We are to meditate upon that affecting consideration which the Apostle introduceth to en-

\* St. John, ch. xv. ver. 4, 5.

force steadfastness in the faith, "He is faithful that promised."

How animating is this reflection! It strengtheneth the believer in his endeavor to maintain, with firmness and constancy, "the profession of the faith." He trusts a faithful GOD. He hath exceeding great and precious promises, the performance whereof is assured to him by the eternal truth of GOD, who cannot lie.

Let us recite some of these promises. "But now, thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel;" thus saith the LORD, not an angel whose power might prove inadequate to the performance of his promise, nor man, who would deceive; but the LORD, the glorious GOD, whose power is only equalled by his faithfulness, he saith, "Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine, my purchased property. When thou passest through the waters, through troubles and afflictions, I will be with thee; my grace shall uphold thee; and through the rivers, through more severe trials, they shall not overflow thee." Believers may be sorely tried and afflicted, yet shall they lose not any thing, except dross, by such visitations. They shall, finally, be more than conquerors through him that hath loved them. It is also said, "When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."\* In fact,

\* Isa. ch. xliii. ver. 1, 2, 3.

as the bush burned, and was not consumed, so the believer, though placed even in the furnace of affliction, shall sustain no real injury. He shall come forth like gold, that is seven times purified in the fire. Upon a remarkable occasion it pleased the LORD, literally to fulfil this promise. It will be perceived, that I allude to the case of the three worthies, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. These were men whose steadfastness in the profession of the faith was severely tried.

An idolatrous king set up his graven image, and commanded that all nations should fall down and worship it. These servants of GOD refused to comply with his sinful injunction. They were brought before the king, he saith unto them, "Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up? If ye fall down and worship the image which I have made, well; but if not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace, and who is that GOD that shall deliver you out of my hands?" "The righteous are as bold as a lion." These three men, therefore, were not in the least daunted at the fierce menance of the king. They reply, "Our GOD whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king; but if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden



image which thou hast set up." The incensed monarch gave commandment, that the furnace should be heated seven times hotter than usual, and that the men should be cast therein. " So these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace."

But did the king so prevail? Were the servants of GOD thus destroyed? No! " Nebuchadnezzar was <sup>sh</sup>ast<sup>on</sup>ied, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did we not cast three men bound into the fire? They answered, True, O King. He said, " Lo, I see four men, loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the SON of GOD. Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, come forth, and come hither. Then, in the presence of the king and all his courtiers, these three men came forth, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them."\* " If GOD be for us, who can be against us?" Every attempt to injure his people is vain. He can preserve life in the depths of the sea, or in the midst of the fire. He can, yea, and he will, rather reverse the

\* Vide Daniel, chap. iii.

whole order of nature, than permit a real injury to be inflicted on one of his people.

To them he saith, " Fear thou not, for I am with thee." When thou considerest thine own infirmity, and comparest it with the great power of thy foes, fearfulness and trembling come upon thee; " Yet be not dismayed, for I am thy Gop." I am thy reconciled GOD and FATHER, " I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee ; yea, I will uphold thee with the right-hand of my righteousness."\*

The redeemed of the LORD will always find that his grace is sufficient for them, his strength made perfect in their weakness. " He is faithful that promised." Not more kind and gracious, in making such promises, than just and true in the performance of them. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but his word shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled. Saith the Psalmist, " He is the LORD GOD which keepeth truth, his promise for ever."† Can we doubt the faithfulness of GOD? All nature reproves such unbelief. Said he not unto Noah, " While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease?‡ " He is faithful that promised." The seasons succeed to each other in their proper order.

\* Isaiah, chap. xli. ver. 10.

† Psalm, cxlvi. ver. 6.

‡ Gen. chap. viii. ver. 22.

We have passed through the dreary winter, we now rejoice in the return of cheerful spring ; and we hope through the never-failing goodness of GOD, to enjoy the appointed weeks of harvest.

HE who is thus faithful in the things pertaining to this life, is equally so in those which respect the hidden life of his people. He saith, " Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb ?" Is it possible that a mother can forget her child ? leave it without food, and exposed to danger ? Can she hear her offspring cry for help, and not fly on the wings of parental love to its relief ? Awful as this is, it may happen ; for it is said, " Yea, they may forget." But is GOD like them ? No ! He saith, " I will not forget thee, behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, and thy walls are continually before me."\* The truth of GOD greatly tends to our encouragement in a steadfast profession of his faith. He hath said, " as thy day so shall thy strength be." He will, therefore, support his people, and give them deliverance in the time of danger. As GOD is faithful to his promise, so should his people be constant in their adherence to *him*. They should be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the LORD, forasmuch as they know that their labour is not in vain in the LORD. " Let us, therefore, hold

\* Isaiah, chap. xlix. ver. 15, 16.



fast the profession of our faith without wavering, for he is faithful that promised."

The subject we have contemplated, excites in our minds the following reflections.

First, That the true christian is, through the divine grace, a steady and consistent character. He hath hope, as an anchor of the soul sure and steadfast. Though the waves of trouble roll, though storms of persecution fall upon him, yet is he in nothing terrified, he knows that GOD is faithful. Though he be assailed by temptations, though the honor, riches, and pleasures of this world, seek to enlarge his affections, to withdraw them from GOD, yet he stands firm. He hath a greater dignity; more permanent riches, and enjoyments, which will endure for ever. He is also a consistent character. His profession and conduct accord well together. He glorifieth GOD in his body, and in his spirit, which are his. We profess the religion of JESUS CHRIST. Are we firm and consistent in our profession? Is our conversation such as becometh the gospel of CHRIST? The LORD grant that we may abound more and more in every good way, and word, and work!

Second, We observe from the subject before us, That the perseverance of a believer is secured to him by the promise of GOD, who cannot lie. It is written, " the LORD will give grace and glory."

He bestoweth the former as a preparation for the latter. That soul which is sanctified by divine grace on earth, shall be admitted to eternal glory in heaven. Whatever God undertakes he completes. If, therefore, the work of grace is begun in the heart, it shall be continued, it shall be perfected. "The top-stone shall be brought forth with shoutings of grace, grace unto it!"

What encouragement do these truths convey to the children of God! Poor, weak, and defenceless in themselves, believers need grace to support their fainting spirits. They have it in CHRIST. Afflicted and troubled, as oftentimes they are, they need consolation. They have it in CHRIST. Guilty and unworthy as they feel themselves to be, they want pardon and righteousness. They have it in CHRIST JESUS, who of God is made unto his people "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Whatever may be necessary for the accomplishment of their present and everlasting happiness, is treasured up in CHRIST! in whom it hath pleased the FATHER, that all fulness should dwell. Yea, and every praying soul may receive out of his adorable fulness "grace for grace." If we desire to obtain, let us ask; if we would find, let us seek. So shall we "hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering." Otherwise, unstable as water, we shall not excel.

There are many who deride the faith, who live in disobedience to its sacred precepts. To these I have a message. Yet not such as a guilty conscience might induce them to expect. I have an offer of mercy, even for them. It is written, "Come, now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." "The SPIRIT saith Come; and the bride saith Come; and let him that heareth, say Come; and whosoever is athirst, let him come, and take of the water of life freely." Accept the offer, and you shall live for ever. But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be destroyed, for the LORD hath spoken it.

May it please GOD to convert our souls; and so to confirm us in his most holy faith, that we may each be enabled to adopt that expressive language. "Yes, verily, and by GOD's help, so I will; and I heartily thank our heavenly FATHER, that he hath called me to this state of salvation, through JESUS CHRIST our SAVIOUR; and I pray unto GOD to give me his grace, that I may continue in the same unto my life's end."





## LECTURE V.

---

ISAIAH, chap. xliii. ver. 12.

*This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise.*

THE predictions contained in holy writ are not to be considered as merely describing the rise and fall of the nations unto which they primarily refer. They speak of more important affairs.

An attentive mind will behold therein a reference unto the various circumstances in which the church of GOD is placed, and a full assurance that his people shall ultimately vanquish every opponent.

If such an application be not admitted, we lose much of that comfort which the word of GOD is designed to impart. For many of the prophecies have long since received their accomplishment, and we feel but little interested in the history of those nations concerning which they speak. On the other, if we are allowed to explain them in a spiritual manner, it will be found that they are admirably calcu-

lated for the encouragement and support of the LORD's redeemed.

In the chapter before us we find a variety of blessed promises, applied unto the Jewish nation. GOD herein assures them, that their captivity should be turned, and their proud oppressors laid low. "Thus saith the LORD your REDEEMER, the HOLY ONE of Israel, for your sake I have sent to Babylon, and have brought down all their nobles, and the Chaldeans whose cry is in the ships."\*

This prophecy hath long been fulfilled. The LORD brought so complete a destruction upon that proud city Babylon, that at this time the spot of ground whereon it stood cannot be ascertained. But the words we have recited, will receive a more glorious and complete accomplishment, when every enemy of the LORD's people shall be finally destroyed, and the whole host of the redeemed stand glorified in the presence of GOD. For the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."†

The text gives us a concise account of what the LORD had wrought in favour of the Jews, and the

\* Isaiah, chap. xliiii. ver. 14.    † Ibid. chap. xxxv. ver. 10.

end to be accomplished by his gracious exertion. He formed them for himself. He chose them as his own inheritance. When they were as yet few in number, and they strangers in the land, he nurtured them with assiduous care. He bare them as on eagle's wings, and notwithstanding all opposition, he planted them in that good land which he had promised unto their forefathers. He thus formed them for himself that they might shew forth his praise. That they might live to his glory. Saith the Psalmist, "He brought forth his people with joy, and his chosen with gladness, and gave them the lands of the heathen; and they inherited the labour of the people, *that they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws.*"\*

We read in *holy scripture* of a spiritual seed, unto whom all the promises of GOD are sure; and the whole body of the church is described as "the Israel of GOD." To these our text is applicable. It declares what the LORD hath wrought in, as well as for them, and asserts, that *he* "will be glorified in all them that believe."

We have selected the passage before us, with reference to that part of the Catechism which is the subject of our present Lecture. "First, I learn to believe in GOD the FATHER, who hath made me and all the world; Secondly, in GOD the SON, who hath

\* Psalm, cv. ver. 43, 44, 45.



redeemed me, and all mankind; and Thirdly, in GOD the HOLY GHOST, who sanctifieth me, and all the elect people of GOD."

The text appears to include whatever is here asserted. "This people I have formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise." That is, I have created them; I have converted their souls by the power of my DIVINE SPIRIT; I have redeemed them by the blood of the everlasting covenant; and I will sanctify them, and they shall shew forth my praise. They shall "glorify me in their bodies, and in their spirits which are mine; and I will be magnified in bestowing upon them a crown of glory, that fadeth not away." In the contemplation of this subject we shall adopt the following method.

First, We shall enquire of whom the prophet speaketh. He saith, "this people."

Second, We shall consider what GOD hath wrought in, and for them. "This people have I formed for myself."

Third, We will contemplate the blessed effect which the work of GOD is designed to produce. "They shall shew forth my praise."

Come, we pray thee, O SPIRIT of truth, enlighten our understanding, that we may know thy

scriptures, and let our souls be sanctified by thine almighty power. May the word of thy grace be made effectual to our salvation.

First, We are to enquire respecting those whom the prophet calleth, "This people."

The first verse of this chapter refers these words to the Jews; "Thus saith the LORD which created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel." These words were peculiarly applicable unto the Jewish nation, who at that time constituted the visible church of GOD; for the Gentiles were excluded from that blessed society.

We are not, however, to suppose that these expressions are capable of no farther application. If it be so, our condition is hopeless. For none can be admitted into the kingdom and glory of GOD, but that people whom he hath formed for himself. The word of GOD encourages a hope that these words may be understood in the most extensive manner. Saith our GOD to his servant Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."\* Not merely shall one people selected from others, as were the Jews, be blessed in the seed of faithful Abraham, but unto all the nations of the earth, both Jews and Gentiles, shall the heavenly benefit be extended. St.

\* Gen. chap. xxii. ver. 18.

Paul speaketh to the same effect. He saith, "Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD will not impute sin. Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? (Is it limited to the Jews, or shall the Gentiles likewise partake thereof?) For we say, that faith was reckoned unto Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? When he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision." Abraham then received the promise of blessedness; his faith was imputed unto him for righteousness, when as others, he was in the uncircumcision of his flesh. "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith, which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also. And the father of the circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised."\* Hence it appears, that the Patriarch is considered as the father of the faithful, whether in circumcision or uncircumcision. These persons are described in holy writ, as "the Israel of GOD." They are certainly included in that number whom the text speaketh of as "this people." St. Peter, addressing the Gentile believers, saith, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priest-

\* Rom. chap. iv. ver. 8 to 12.



hood, a peculiar people, that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness, into his marvellous light."\* We are guided in our application of this scripture by the address found in the beginning of the epistle. "Peter, an Apostle of JESUS CHRIST, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of GOD the FATHER." These strangers were Gentiles; for the Apostle saith, "Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of GOD; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."†

It appears then that the Prophet, in his expression, "This people," includes the whole church of GOD, whether Jews or Gentiles, yea all that shall be called into the family of heaven. They are described in the sacred writings, as "a great multitude, which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues."‡ They are called "This people," by way of eminent distinction, to denote that they are the peculiar objects of the divine favor, that the LORD knoweth and revealeth himself unto them. The faithful people of GOD are the salt which preserves this world from corruption and decay; when they are gathered in, it will no longer exist.—They are his people, his treasure, or as our excellent Catechism saith, "the elect people of GOD."

\* Pet. ch. iv. ver. 9. † Ibid. ver. 10. ‡ Rev. ch. vii. ver. 9.

“ With them number’d may we be,  
Here and in eternity.”

Second, We are to consider what the LORD hath wrought in and for them.—“ This people have I formed for myself.” These words do not merely refer to the creation of man, as formed of the dust of the earth, into whose nostrils GOD breathed the breath of life, so that he became a living soul. In this view it is said, “ The LORD hath made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil.”\* St. Paul teacheth how this assertion must be understood. He saith, “ We are his workmanship, created in CHRIST JESUS unto good works, which GOD hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”†

The Apostle here refers to that work of grace which the LORD carrieth on in the hearts of his chosen people— Our blessed LORD describeth it as a new birth. “ Verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the SPIRIT, he cannot enter into the kingdom of GOD.‡ This work of GOD is also spoken of as a new creation. It is written, “ If any man be in CHRIST, he is a new creature, old things are passed away, behold all things are become new ;

\* Prov. chap. xvi. ver. 4.

† Eph. chap. ii. ver. 10.

‡ St. John, chap. iii. ver. 5.

and all things are of GOD.\* Saith the Psalmist, "KNOW ye that the LORD he is GOD; it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture."†

This passage refers as well to the renewal of the soul, whereby the sinner is brought into the fold of GOD, as to his introduction into this world by the divine power. Many are brought into existence who live and die without the knowledge of GOD; but every regenerate person is a "sheep of his pasture." These scripture declarations remind us of the Catechism, which saith, "First, I learn to believe in GOD the FATHER, who hath made me, and all the world." We here acknowledge that the LORD hath created all things by the word of his power. We profess our faith in him as our CREATOR. Such a profession includes a dependance upon him for the continuation of our existence, a persuasion that he is able also to destroy that which his hands have formed. Ah! what numbers live in a state of practical atheism! How many who repeat the acknowledgement have never considered the truth it asserts! We may likewise understand these words as having reference unto the conversion of the soul by the power of GOD. Thus viewed, they assert, that every real christian is made such by his almighty

\* 2 Cor. chap. v. ver. 17, 18.

† Psalm, c. ver. 3.



power, who " calleth the things which are not, as though they were." Saith the Apostle, " We give thanks unto the FATHER, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance with the saints in light, who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear SON."\*

Such is that work which the LORD accomplishes in his people. But he hath also wrought for them. We are taught in the Catechism to say, " Second, I learn to believe in GOD the SON, who hath redeemed me, and all mankind." GOD, as a righteous law-giver, could not without some expiation, be just in justifying the rebel man; nor could man, as a sinner, atone for himself; but the LORD, in unspeakable mercy, devised a wondrous plan of redemption, wherein " mercy and justice are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other." He gave his own SON to be a ransom for the sins of his people; and through *him*, he bestoweth upon them grace and glory. It is written, " According to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the HOLY GHOST, which he shed on us abundantly through JESUS CHRIST our SAVIOUR.† And again, " CHRIST hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth

\* Col. chap. i. ver. 12, 13.      † Titus, chap. iii. ver. 5.

on a tree."\* Oh! miracle of mercy; the SON of GOD, he who inhabiteth eternity, condescended to assume the human nature, and offer up himself as a sacrifice for the sins of men! His most precious blood was shed for many for the remission of sins. It is therefore said, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your forefathers; but with the precious blood of CHRIST, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."† Those who truly believe in GOD the SON, as a REDEEMER, do, in their own hearts, experience the blessings of redemption. They are delivered from guilt; they have peace with GOD, the love of whom is shed abroad in their hearts by the HOLY GHOST. May this be our case!

There is an expression in this part of the Catechism which must be explained: "All mankind."

Are we to understand these words as an assertion that every individual of the human race shall be delivered from everlasting destruction by the LORD JESUS CHRIST? We apprehend not. In the clause which immediately follows these words, which must be so explained as not to contradict this, we are taught to acknowledge our faith in GOD the HOLY GHOST, as the sanctifier of all the elect people of

\* Gal. chap. iii. ver. 13.    † 1 Peter, chap. i. ver. 18, 19.

GOD. If it be said, that by "the elect people of GOD," the church intends "all mankind," we shall assert what every one knows to be an untruth, even that all men are sanctified, or made holy. If, on the other hand, it be asserted, that only some particular persons, described as "the elect of GOD," are sanctified, we must then admit, that by the expression "all mankind," the church intends only such persons. Otherwise we adopt the most abominable and licentious position, that unsanctified, that is unholy characters, may be admitted into heaven. But it is written, "Without holiness no man shall see the LORD." Our blessed SAVIOUR hath taught us, that "many are called, but few are chosen;"\* and, in the communion service, we are directed to pray, that "through faith in a SAVIOUR'S blood, we, and all the whole church of GOD (not the whole world), may obtain the remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his death and passion." The expression, therefore, "all mankind," intends no more than "the elect people of GOD," who are sanctified by the influences of GOD the HOLY SPIRIT.

To sanctify, is to set apart for some peculiar purpose, and to make holy. In both of these respects "the elect of GOD" are sanctified. They are set apart as "vessels of honor, meet for the master's use;" The thoughts of their hearts are so cleansed

\* Heb. chap. xii. ver. 14.



by the inspiration of the HOLY SPIRIT, that they “delight in the law of GOD after the inward man.” Thus hath the LORD formed them for himself. The people of GOD are his peculiar property. They are his by choice. He chose them in CHRIST JESUS before the foundation of the world. They are his by purchase. They constitute the church of GOD, which he hath purchased with his own blood.\* They are his as created anew by his divine power. They “were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of GOD.”† They are his, as devoted to his service, and fitted for the enjoyment of his kingdom and glory. Unto them he saith, “Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.” And again, “the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy GOD thy glory.”

Thirdly, We are to contemplate the blessed effect which this work of GOD is designed to produce.

“They shall shew forth my praise.”

The work of creation reflects much honour and glory upon GOD. It displays his wisdom, his power, and his goodness. At the accomplishment

\* Acts, chap. xx. ver. 28.

† St. John, chap. i. ver. 13.

thereof, "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of GOD shouted for joy." But the work of redemption exceedeth in glory. In this we behold with devout astonishment, the brightest display of the divine perfections. Herein is the righteousness of GOD revealed from faith to faith; so that GOD is just and the justifier of him that believeth in JESUS. We may learn the glories of redemption by the effects it produceth. It rescueth guilty rebels of the human race from that depth of misery and ruin into which they were plunged by sin. It is a deliverance from the bondage of corruption, an introduction into the glorious liberty of the children of GOD. The hearts of the redeemed, sanctified by the HOLY SPIRIT, are filled with pious dispositions, which produce in their conduct the fruit of good works, to the praise and glory of GOD. For the attainment of these objects, JESUS died. Saith the Apostle, "CHRIST loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."\* The REDEEMER came not as a minister of sin. The gospel he preached is pure and holy. By the gracious influences of the DIVINE SPIRIT, a people are formed for GOD, and they shall shew forth

\* Eph. chap. v. ver. 25, 26, 27.

his praise. They shall glorify GOD in their body and in their spirit, which are his. They are described in the Catechism, as the elect people of GOD, who are sanctified by the HOLY GHOST. The LORD hath a peculiar people, "whom he hath chosen in CHRIST before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love." They are vessels of mercy, which GOD had afore prepared unto glory. This chosen seed, this "elect people" are called by the divine power to the knowledge of CHRIST and his gospel. Formed for GOD, they shew forth his praise. They glorify him by the obedience of the heart. Saith the Apostle, "I delight in the law of GOD after the inward man."—They likewise honor GOD, by the conformity of their lives unto his most holy will. They are known by their fruits; and in them is their heavenly FATHER magnified. It is their constant aim to "let their light so shine before men, that they may see their good works, and glorify their FATHER which is in heaven." They shew forth the praise of GOD by their cheerful submission unto all the appointments of his sovereign will. They can say under the most afflictive dispensations, "It is the LORD, let him do what seemeth him good." Their minds are supported, for they know that "all things work together for good to them that love GOD, to them who are the called according to his pur-



pose."\* They shall, finally, glorify GOD in his heavenly kingdom. There shall they cast their crowns before his throne, saying, "Thou art worthy, O LORD, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created." They will sing, "Worthy is the LAMB that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." Thus shall the people whom GOD hath formed for himself, shew forth his praise. How complete, how glorious is that redemption by which these noble effects are produced! Well might the Apostle exclaim, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of GOD, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

The assertion of the text is positive. "They *shall* shew forth my praise." The work of GOD is perfect. The means which he employs are always adequate to the accomplishment of those purposes for which they were appointed. A converted person must needs glorify GOD. The redeeming love of CHRIST constraineth him. His heart is purified from the love and power of sin, therefore he will praise GOD, not merely with his lips, but with an heart and life devoted to his service. Such is that

\* Rom. ch. viii. ver. 28.

blessed effect which the work of GOD is designed to produce.

The following reflections are suggested by the truths which we have attempted to enforce.

First, That the adorable TRINITY graciously concur as ONE GOD in the accomplishment of human redemption. GOD the FATHER chose his people in CHRIST JESUS, before the foundations of the world were laid. He freely gave his SON for them, and by his power they are formed for his praise.

GOD the SON, condescended for their sakes, to become "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." To obey the law of GOD which they had violated, and to endure the penalty incurred by their transgressions. Saith the Prophet, "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed."\* He now sits at the right-hand of GOD interceding for his people, who shall hereafter live with him in glory.

GOD the HOLY SPIRIT reneweth, and sanctifieth the souls of the elect. He revealeth in their hearts the grace of the gospel; guideth their feet in

\* Isaiah, chap. liii. ver. 5.

the way of peace, and comforteth them in all their tribulations. By these things men live; in these is the life of their spirit. May we know them to our present comfort, to our everlasting happiness.

Second, We observe, That the redeemed are the peculiar property of GOD. They are formed for himself. “ They shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels, and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.”\* “ They shall be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of their GOD.” He will protect and preserve them by his mighty power, through faith unto salvation.

We profess to believe in the adorable TRINITY. We acknowledge GOD the FATHER as the CREATOR; GOD the SON as the REDEEMER; and GOD the HOLY GHOST as the SANCTIFIER of the elect. Are we created anew in CHRIST JESUS? Do we know *him* as our REDEEMER? Hath the SPIRIT of GOD converted our souls? Do we glorify GOD by the obedience of our heart and conduct unto his commandments? The LORD teach us to know and do these things! “ May *he* form us for himself; we shall then shew forth his praise.”

\* St. Matt. chap. iii. ver. 17.





## LECTURE VI.

EXODUS, chap. xx. ver. 1 to 6.

*And GOD spake all these words saying, I am the LORD thy GOD which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the LORD thy GOD am a jealous GOD, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and shewing mercy to thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.*

THESE words were pronounced in a most awful manner, by the great and mighty GOD. He delivered his people from their bondage in Egypt by a mighty hand and a stretched out arm. He brought them into the wilderness, where he pleaded with them face to face. Saith the sacred historian, "It came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet

exceeding loud, so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire, and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.\* The tribes of Israel in their camp were troubled at the presence of the LORD. They could not sustain so tremendous a display of the DIVINE MAJESTY. "For all the people saw the thundering and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking. And when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, speak thou with us, and we will hear, but let not GOD speak with us, lest we die."† Had the obedience of the Jews to the divine law been proportioned to the alarm they experienced while it was pronounced, how many calamities they would have escaped!

The disciples of CHRIST are addressed by GOD. His voice to them is not that of terror. It is written, "Ye are not come to the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words, which voice, they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken unto them any more. But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living GOD, the

\* Exod. ch. xix. ver. 16, 18.      † Ibid. ch. xx. ver. 18, 19.

heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly and church of the first-born which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect; and to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than that of Abel.\* Happy are those who hear and obey this blessed voice. They shall live for ever!

However the solemnities which attended the promulgation of the law were great and awful, yet there is a day approaching whose terrors greatly exceeding these, the whole human race shall behold. I refer to the day of judgment. Then not merely shall one mountain smoke, but the whole world kindled by the vengeful lightnings of the ALMIGHTY, shall burn. Yea, the elements being on fire, “shall melt away with fervent heat; the earth also, and all the works therein, shall be burned up. Then the thunders and trumpet of God will be heard, not merely by a few individuals trembling in a camp; they will resound from pole to pole. They will penetrate the dark caverns of death, and those who sleep in the dust of the earth, shall awake at the sound thereof. Then, not one nation alone, but all mankind shall be assembled in the presence of God; “for we must all appear before the judgement-seat of CHRIST, that

\* Heb. chap, xii. ver. 18, 19, 22, 23, 24.



every one may receive the things done in the body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or evil."

In the text, GOD recites to the Jews the great deliverance he had wrought out for them, and requires of them as an evidence of their gratitude for his mercy, the observance of his righteous law. These words are applicable to the church of GOD in our times. The LORD hath delivered his people from the power of satan, and brought them into the way of life. Surely such cannot, for a moment, suppose themselves liberated from all obligation to obedience. No, they will be conformable to the law of GOD, and thus express their gratitude for the inestimable blessings of his full and free salvation.

There are two things in the text which require our attention.

First, The motive upon which obedience to the law of GOD is required; a grateful sense of mercies received from *him*.

Second, The nature and extent of the duty which is here commanded.

Send down thine HOLY SPIRIT, O LORD, that

our meditations upon these subjects may be productive of good unto our souls !

First, We are to consider the motive upon which obedience to the divine law is required ; a grateful sense of mercies received at the hand of GOD.

The service which the LORD requires of his people, is not unreasonable ; nor is it exacted in an arbitrary or tyrannical manner. Though GOD as our CREATOR and SOVEREIGN might justly command our obedience, yet renouncing, as it were, this claim, he condescends in the endearing character of friend and benefactor to require our conformity unto his righteous will. We have an instance of this in the text. " I am the LORD thy GOD." Thine in a peculiar manner ; even thy GOD in covenant. The LORD GOD of thy fathers, of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." The Jews, no doubt, felt the force of this address. They had just emerged from a state of cruel bondage in the land of Egypt. Nor were they rescued, but by signs and miracles, a mighty hand, and an out-stretched arm. Yea, to accomplish their deliverance, the destroying angel went forth and slew all the first-born throughout the land of Egypt. " The Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour, and they made their lives bitter with hard bondage in mortar, and in

brick : and in all manner of service in the field. All their service wherein they made them serve was with rigour.\* Pharaoh also commanded the taskmasters of the people, and their officers, saying, “ Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore ; let them go and gather straw for themselves : and the tale of the brick, which they did make heretofore, you shall put upon them ; you shall not diminish ought thereof, for they be idle ; therefore they cry, saying, Let us go and sacrifice to our GOD. (There are many, I fear, even in our own times, who consider every desire and attempt to serve GOD as an indication of idleness.) Let there be more work laid upon the men, that they may labour therein, and let them not regard vain words.”† Vain words ! Insolent king of Egypt. Thou didst not then find them vain, when the thunders of GOD rolled dreadful over thy guilty land ; and the fire mingled with hail, ran along upon the ground. Thou didst not find them vain words, in that fearful night, when the avenging sword of the destroyer cut off all the first-born of thy land. If thy guilty soul departed hence unsubdued and impenitent, thou dost not at this moment find the words of GOD to be vain, in that awful abode of misery, where thou shalt for ever endure the full weight of the divine indignation. The power of GOD vanquished the haughty monarch, he let go the people of Israel, and the LORD carried them to that

\* Exod. ch. i. ver. 13, 14.

† Ibid. ch. v. ver. 6 to 9.



good land which he had promised unto their fathers. From them he required obedience as a display of their gratitude for these unspeakable mercies. "These things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." The Egyptian bondage presents us with a lively representation of that dreadful slavery which oppresses every unconverted character. Saith St. Paul, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness."\* And our blessed LORD saith, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin."† We cannot, without sorrow, reflect, that all men are by nature the servants of sin. They bear an iron yoke of bondage, imposed on them by the "prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." This servitude is far more oppressive and degrading than that of Israel in Egypt. For it enslaves the mind, prevents its exertion, and reduces it to a state which holy scripture calls a death in trespasses and sins. It is an unprofitable service. It is written, "what fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed; for the end of those things is death."‡ As the Jews could only be rescued from the tyranny of

\* Rom. ch. vi. ver. 16.

† St. John, ch. viii. ver. 34.

‡ Rom. ch. vi. ver. 21.

Pharaoh by the power of GOD, so it is by the same power that the soul is delivered from the bondage of corruption. We are so firmly tied and bound by the chain of our sins, we are so fast in prison, that we cannot get forth. But JESUS CHRIST, the LORD of life and glory, proclaimeth liberty to the captives, the opening of the prison to them that are bound. His atoning blood delivers from guilt and condemnation. His almighty SPIRIT emancipates the soul; he delivers from the love and power of sin; he brings us into the glorious liberty of the children of GOD. He saith, "If the SON shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."\* Being made free from sin, ye shall become servants to GOD; your fruit shall be unto holiness, and your blessed end everlasting life. This genuine and desirable freedom is imparted unto the souls of the LORD's redeemed. And a grateful sense of the goodness of GOD in the gift of so great a blessing, constrains them to devote themselves unto his service. They love him because he first loved them; and under the influence of this love they enquire, "What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits?" The most powerful motives to obedience are thus excited. The terrific denunciations of the divine wrath, against sin, will not subdue the mind.

" Law and terrors do but harden  
All the while they work alone;  
But a sense of blood-bought pardon  
Soon dissolves an heart of stone."†

\* St. John, ch. viii. ver. 36.

† Dr. Watts.

The more we contemplate the goodness of GOD, as displayed in the great work of redemption, the greater will be our desire to glorify him in the conformity of our life unto his law. We shall be studious in all things to adorn the doctrine of GOD our SAVIOUR; and, if the motive which actuates us to this constant diligence be enquired after, we shall reply, "the love of CHRIST constraineth us." Under the influence of this blessed principle, may we walk before GOD in righteousness and true holiness, all the days of our lives!

Second, We are to consider the nature and extent of the duty enjoined in the text.

"Thou shalt have no other GOD before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I, the LORD thy GOD, am a jealous GOD, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments."

In the first of these precepts we are enjoined to have no other GOD beside the LORD JEHOVAH; in the second we are forbidden to worship the true GOD in



a false, unworthy, manner. In their primary application these commands refer entirely to the Jews, who were taken from the midst of a people wholly given to idolatry, and surrounded by nations whose worship was idolatrous. To preserve them from the infection thereof, this commandment was enforced by the severest penalties. It is written, "If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers; namely, of the gods of the people which are round about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee, from the one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth, thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him; but thou shalt surely kill him. Thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death; and thou shalt stone him with stones, that he die; because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the LORD thy GOD, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. And all Israel shall hear, and fear, and shall do no more any such wickedness as this is among you."\*

It is lamentable to observe, that a great society of professing christians, may justly be accused as

\* Deut. chap. xiii. ver. 6 to 11.

idolaters. They set up their graven images as objects of religious adoration ; and, like Nebuchadnezzar of old, would consign to the burning fiery furnace all who refuse to worship them. Their prayers are addressed to pretended saints, many of whom, if history may be credited, were most dissipated and vicious characters. Yea, they give that honour and service to the lowly mother of JESUS, which is, alone, due to *him*, “ who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.” Blessed be GOD who hath delivered this church and kingdom from so foul a stain. May he preserve among us, the clear light of his holy word ; may his watchful providence ever keep from our native land so corrupt a system !

In their spiritual interpretation, these commandments forbid the indulgence of any sinful lust or passion. Know assuredly that whatever lust is gratified in opposition to the revealed will of heaven, is worshipped and served even in preference to GOD. That obedience is paid unto its imperious and destructive mandate, which we refuse unto the mild and salutary precepts of our HEAVENLY FATHER.

How extensive is the divine law ! The sacred injunctions thereof are intended not merely to regulate the external deportment, but to guide and influence the very thoughts of the heart. Saith the Psalmist, “ Thy commandment is exceeding broad.”\*

\* Psalm, cxix. ver. 96.

And the Apostle, "The law is spiritual."\* The contemplation of this truth will constrain us to say, "Who can tell how oft he offendeth? Cleanse thou me from secret faults."

The second commandment closes with a remarkable assertion. "For I, the LORD thy GOD, am a jealous GOD, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children." Let ungodly parents consider what misery they may occasion their children. To such I would say, your wicked example contaminates the mind of your offspring, prevents the good influence of every holy principle which is inculcated, encourages them to imitate your crimes, and thus exposes them to that dreadful punishment which is the necessary consequence of guilt. This denunciation must be so considered. GOD, who is righteous in all his ways, will not punish the innocent for the crimes of their guilty progenitors. He saith, What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the childrens' teeth are set on edge? As I live, saith the LORD GOD, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. Yet ye say, Why? doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live. The soul that sinneth it shall die. The

\* Rom. chap. vii. ver. 14.



son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.”\* If the denunciation of vengeance be thought severe, it is more than counterbalanced by the gracious language which follows, “ Shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.” Gracious is the LORD and righteous; yea our GOD is merciful. How powerful the incentive to obedience which these words contain. Parents naturally desire the welfare of their offspring. They are here taught how to secure it. Let them live in obedience to the will of GOD, in prayer, in faith, in love, in active holiness. So shall they obtain a blessing for their children. GOD will answer their prayers when they, perhaps, have long slept in the dark chambers of the grave. And it may be expected, that the noble example of a life and conversation devoted to the divine service, will produce the happiest effects in the minds of their offspring. Thus they may, under GOD, be the means of their obtaining the best, the most secure of all possessions, a “ treasure in heaven, where neither moth nor rust do corrupt, and where thieves break not through nor steal.” For the LORD “ sheweth mercy unto thousands of them that love him, and keep his commandments.”

\* Ezek. chap. xviii. ver. 2, 3. 19, 20.

From the truths we have contemplated we learn the great goodness of the LORD unto his people. He beholds them the willing slaves of sin and satan, under the most cruel oppression exposed to the most dreadful calamities. "He remembereth them in their low estate, for his mercy endureth for ever." "He delivereth them from the power of satan, and translateth them into the kingdom of his dear SON." He bestoweth liberty upon the captives; he openeth the prison unto those who were bound. Have we experienced this deliverance? Are we brought into the service of GOD which is perfect freedom? The LORD grant that we may.

The truth we have advanced hath also a tendency to humble the soul before GOD. Who can say I am pure? In many things we offend all. And the recollection that the divine law takes cognizance of the thoughts and dispositions of the heart, may cause the stoutest to tremble. If we are acquainted with ourselves we shall be disposed, with the Apostle, to say, "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." We have rebelled against GOD, and as rebels are exposed to condemnation. Surely, then, we have nothing whereof we may glory. Pride is not suited either to our state or character. Be this therefore the language of our heart and lip: "Behold I am vile; I will lay my hand upon my mouth." "GOD be merciful to me a sinner!" This will best accord with our guilty and depraved condition. May

it please the LORD to impart unto us a spirit of deep and unfeigned humility, that we may be exalted with the blessings of his salvation.

Lastly, The truth we have advanced may teach us our need of a SAVIOUR.

While we live under the influence of self-righteous pride, while we apprehend that our own obedience will obtain for us an admission into the realms of glory, we behold no form nor comeliness in the lowly JESUS. He saith, indeed, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." No marvel, therefore, that he is not received by those who trust in themselves that they are righteous. When, however, we are convinced of sin by the perfect law of GOD, when the extent and purity of that law shews the lurking vileness of our hearts, and we find that we cannot so obey it as thereby to obtain salvation, then JESUS becomes desirable in our sight. We earnestly long to know *him*, who "is the end of the law for righteousness unto every one that believeth." And as we are sensible of our utter weakness and imperfection, we desire an interest in *him*, whose "grace is sufficient for his people, whose strength is made perfect in their weakness."

While Paul was in an unconverted state, a proud Pharisee, he verily thought that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of JESUS of Naza-



reth. He was a persecutor and injurious; but when the LORD had awakened his mind, and humbled him under a sense of guilt, he knew the worth of a SAVIOUR. He thus declares his sentiments upon the subject: "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for CHRIST. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of CHRIST JESUS my LORD, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win CHRIST, and be found in *him*, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of CHRIST, the righteousness which is of GOD by faith."\* May we imbibe the same blessed SPIRIT. Having the sentence of death in ourselves, may we be brought as sinners to the footstool of JESUS, and be saved in *him* with an everlasting salvation!

\* Philip. chap. iii. ver 7, 8, 9.



## LECTURE VII.

EXODUS, chap. xx. ver. 7 to 11.

*Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy GOD in vain ; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work ; but the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy GOD, in it thou shalt not do any work ; thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter ; thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day ; wherefore the LORD blessed the seventh day and hallowed it.*

THE duties enforced by the divine law, tend to promote our comfort and advantage, even in this present life. The most superficial observer must acknowledge that great benefits result from a due observance of the sabbath. Were it not for this happy institution, the poor would be strangers to relaxation and comfort. Perpetually chained to the labouring oar, they would probably degenerate into a state of

barbarism. Their mental faculties would be contracted, they might become disqualified for the knowledge of GOD; and thus be lost for ever.

The appointment of the sabbath gives them an intervening day of rest. Released from labour and toil, they taste the sweets of domestic life. They are brought to the house of GOD, their hearts are rejoiced by the glad tidings of everlasting salvation; and they are supported under their present circumstances of distress by the reviving hope of eternal repose and glory in heaven.

Our present Lecture hath for its object the explanation of the precepts before us, and the reasons assigned to enforce our obedience as they are found in the text. The first precept requires that we respect the great and holy name of GOD. "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy GOD in vain." This injunction not only prohibits the detestable practice of profane cursing and swearing; but likewise all needless and unsuitable introduction of that awful name, the LORD thy GOD. Many, even of those who profess religion, oft violate this precept; they use their MAKER'S name as a mere exclamation. Such a practice is referred to by the avowedly profane, to justify, or at least palliate, their own horrid blasphemies. We should ever retain in our mind those awful words, "It is impossible but that offences will come; but woe unto him through whom



they come."\* Upon whatever occasion the holy name of God is introduced without the deepest reverence and humility, it is taken in vain. The hypocrite, and the careless profane it, even in their pretended religious worship. Our blessed LORD hath illustrated this precept in his admirable sermon upon the mount. "I say unto you, swear not at all, neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great king. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communications be yea, yea, nay, nay, for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil."† We learn from these words, that we should be careful how, and what we speak. And the more so, as the LORD saith, "Verily, I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment; for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." Saith St. James, "Above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, nor by the earth, nor by any other oath; but let your yea, be yea; and your nay, nay, lest ye fall into condemnation."‡ This command may be considered as prohibiting all profaneness of conversation; all needless introduction of the divine name. It requires that the great

\* St. Luke, ch. xvii. ver. 1. † St. Matt. ch. v. ver. 34 to 37.

‡ St. James, ch. v. ver. 12.

and holy name be always repeated with a due sense of his majesty to whom it refers. It doth not appear that any thing therein contained prohibits a solemn appeal to GOD as to the truth of that testimony which is borne in a court of judicature. Yet it must be considered, that oaths among us have lost much of their solemnity by their needless frequency, and the trifling manner in which they are introduced. There is but too much occasion for the query of the poet :

“ And hast thou sworn on every slight pretence,  
'Till perjuries are common as bad pence ;  
While thousands, careless of the damning sin,  
Kiss the book's outside, who ne'er look within.”\*

An obedience to this command is enforced by a denunciation of vengeance against each offender. “ The LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.” He will consider and treat him as a guilty character, who shall profane his awful name. Disobedience to GOD will be followed by punishment. The divine law is guarded by the most awful sanctions. And the great lawgiver will execute upon the rebellious his menaced vengeance. It is written, “ As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him ; as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him. As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it come into his bowels

\* Cowper.

like water; and like oil into his bones. Let it be unto him as the garment that covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually.\* To hear of such vengeance is dreadful; but how much more so, to fall under the stroke thereof. Thou rash and insolent child of dust, who art invoking the ALMIGHTY to deprive thee of sight, to curse thy members, what would be thy state should GOD in just displeasure, seal with his fiat, thy wicked execration? Thou madman, who art calling upon that vengeance which, even now, is ready to overwhelm thee, to anticipate its awful stroke, by consigning thee to immediate destruction; think how dreadful thy state, should GOD fulfil thine imprecation. If thou departest this life impenitent; *he* will accomplish it. For “the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget GOD.” Let the prophane be admonished; let each be cautious, that he no more take the name of GOD in vain; for “the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.”

The next precept which occurs, hath respect unto the sabbath day.

“Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy: six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy GOD, in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son,

\* Psalm, cix. ver. 17, 18, 19.



nor thy daughter; thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant; nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates." Surely this command is not unreasonable. He who freely gives us all our time, may well require that so small a portion as a seventh part of it should be consecrated to his service. We are taught in the word of GOD how the sabbath should be kept. "Turn away thy foot from the sabbath from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words."\* Many, if we may judge from their conduct, consider the sabbath as a day set apart *for finding their own pleasure*. When expostulated with, they reply, We are closely confined during the whole week, by the avocations of business; and, therefore, excepting the Sunday, we have no time for the enjoyment of needful relaxation. In your opinion, then, it is ~~more~~ proper to encroach upon the single day which GOD requires for his service, than any part of the remaining six which *he* gives you for the care of your temporal concerns; and you esteem disobedience to a positive command of GOD, to be a less evil than a temporary relaxation from business during the days of labour. The apology is equally vile with the fault; and to those who can urge it, the language of scripture may be applied, "I perceive

\* Isaiah, chap. lviii. ver. 13.

that ye are in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity.”\* To keep holy the sabbath duty, requires somewhat more than a mere attendance upon the house and public ordinances of GOD. Ere we enter the holy temple, we should pour out our souls in prayer unto that sovereign LORD from whom alone cometh the preparation of the heart. We should request that we may be enabled to offer up a sacrifice well-pleasing and acceptable to GOD through our LORD JESUS CHRIST; that *he* would give the minister grace to speak, and ourselves to hear the important truths of the gospel, so that our souls may receive benefit, and *his name* glory. Having thus requested the divine presence and blessing, we should enter the house of the LORD. We should go up to the temple at the hour of prayer; and not by a late attendance disturb the whole assembly, and excite a suspicion that we do not greatly regard the former part of the divine worship. Our conduct in the house of GOD must be regulated by that sacred precept, “Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of GOD, and be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools, for they consider not that they do evil. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before GOD, for GOD is in heaven, and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few.”† While we are within the sacred walls, let our deportment be grave and solemn, our position, such as the nature of the service requires. If engaged in

\* Acts, chap. viii. ver. 23.      † Eccl. chap. v. ver. 1, 2.

prayer, kneeling will be most expressive of our inward humility. If in praise, it appears more suitable that we should stand. If we are hearing the word of GOD, it will be more convenient for a serious attention unto what is delivered, that we sit. Those who affect a singularity in their position; who will sit, when the assembly around them are kneeling in prayer, or standing to praise the GOD of all mercies, at least discover a want of respect and attention. And however it may be true, that religion doth not consist in posture, form, or ceremony, yet it is to be observed, that "GOD is not the author of confusion, but of order, as in all the churches of the saints."\* When we depart from the house of GOD, it behoves us to retire from the world and meditate upon the important truth we have heard, to examine our hearts and lives by the sacred precepts; and offer up our prayers unto the LORD, that his word which hath been spoken, may be attended with his blessing.

Having thus addressed our FATHER which seeth in secret, we should collect our families; examine them respecting the truth they have been taught, instruct them so far as we are able, in the good things of GOD; and unite with them in prayer that the LORD may bless the means of grace unto their salva-

\* It will be perceived, that what is here said can only refer to the custom of the established church, which ought to be regarded by those who attend her worship. The Author has neither right, nor inclination to prescribe for those of a different communion.



tion. Many who hear the word of God with apparent seriousness and attention, seem, nevertheless, to forget it when they leave the holy temple. They mingle in the most frivolous conversations, criticise the conduct and deportment of others; while they neither examine, nor censure the improper dispositions of their own hearts. But this is not to keep holy the sabbath day.

The sabbath is called a day of rest; not merely of cessation from bodily labour, or the necessary duties of our respective temporal employments; but a season of repose and joy to the soul. Such the true believer finds it. He experiences the accomplishment of the divine promise; "Thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and chuse the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; even unto them will I give in mine house, and within my walls, a place and a name, better than of sons and of daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off. Also to the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants; every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant, even them I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house

of prayer for all people."\* How delightful a day is the sabbath to those whom the LORD thus blesses. They are glad of such an opportunity to retire from the corroding cares of this evil world, and devote themselves to prayer and meditation upon the glories of GOD their REDEEMER. Such are happy to begin in the courts of the LORD's earthly temple, that solemn and glorious sabbath which they shall hereafter celebrate in the new and heavenly Jerusalem. Their privilege it is, to meet GOD in all the ordinances of his appointment; and to experience in the manifestations of his reconciled countenance, a foretaste and pledge of that complete felicity which shall be their everlasting portion. Ye highly favoured sons of GOD, go on your way rejoicing. Soon will the glorious period arrive, wherein you shall be for ever delivered from sin and sorrow; wherein, from celebrating the sabbath of GOD upon earth, you shall be translated to solemnize a blessed sabbath in heaven. There your assembly will not be defiled by the presence of sinners; your devotion not disturbed by the levity and inattention of careless professors, nor your hymns of praise rendered languid or cold by the power of in-dwelling sin. Happy, happy time! We long, we faint for thine arrival! Hasten your course, ye revolving years; bring on speedily that glorious morn, the birth day of heaven and earth, which shall commence the everlasting sabbath! Come quickly,

\* Isaiah, chap. lvi. ver. 4 to 7.

O blessed LORD JESUS ! Hasten, if it be thy will, the time of thy second appearance, without sin unto salvation !

To the children of this world, the sabbath must prove a wearisome day. Their language is, when will the sabbath be ended, that we may set forth wheat ? These have no relish for heavenly food ; while, therefore, with loathing and contempt they refuse that glorious feast which the LORD hath provided ; they devour with rapacious eagerness the meats of death ; yea, they greedily swallow intoxicating potions of worldly pleasure, though assured that poison lurks in the sparkling glass. May GOD in mercy convert their souls, and bring them forth into the paths of righteousness for his name's sake !

The reason which the LORD hath been pleased to assign for the sanctification of the sabbath, is declared in the close of our text. " For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day : wherefore the LORD blessed the seventh day and hallowed it." The sabbath then was originally designed to commemorate the power and goodness of GOD as displayed in the work of creation. The observance thereof was ordained long before the promulgation of the law upon mount Sinai : it is written, " On the seventh day GOD ended his work which he had



made. And GOD blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because that in it, he had rested from all his work which GOD created and made."\* We learn, hence, the perpetual authority of this commandment, which is in fact, no more than a confirmation of an ordinance long before instituted. Previous to our blessed LORD's incarnation, the sabbath was celebrated on the seventh day, with reference to the accomplishment of creation. But since his resurrection, which took place on the first day of the week, *that* hath generally been sanctified as the Christian sabbath. Those christian assemblies of which the scripture gives account, were held on the first day of the week. Most of the interviews with which our REDEEMER favored his disciples, after his resurrection, occurred on the same day. It is written, "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut, where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, came JESUS and stood in the midst of them; and saith unto them, "Peace be unto you." And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands, and his side; then were the disciples glad when they saw the LORD."† Upon the authority of these high examples, and to commemorate that blessed event, the resurrection of the SAVIOUR, we celebrate the first day of the week instead of the seventh, as the sabbath of the LORD. The assembly wherein Eutychus,

\* Gen. ch. ii. ver. 2, 3.

† St. John, ch. xx. ver. 19, 20.

who St. Paul afterwards restored to life, fell down asleep, and was taken up dead, was held upon this day. Saith the sacred historian, "Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his speech until midnight. And there were many lights in the upper chamber where they were assembled together. And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep; and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell from the third loft, and was taken up dead. And Paul went down, and fell upon him, and embracing him said, trouble not yourselves, for his life is in him."\* It hath been supposed that the Apostles received commandment from the LORD to celebrate the first day of the week as their sabbath. It appears natural to apprehend, that such a practice would not have prevailed so early, and so constantly in the christian church, had it not been enforced by some weighty considerations. If the blessings of complete redemption are revealed in the heart, they will afford sufficient reason to justify the observance of this as the day of rest. A believer knows that creation without redemption, is misery and ruin. He feels the love of CHRIST so constraining his heart, that he exclaims, LORD, I desire to devote unto thy service, not merely one seventh part of, but all my time.

\* Acts, chap. xx. ver. 7 to 11.

I would "glorify thee in my body, and in my spirit, which are thine." May we be such.

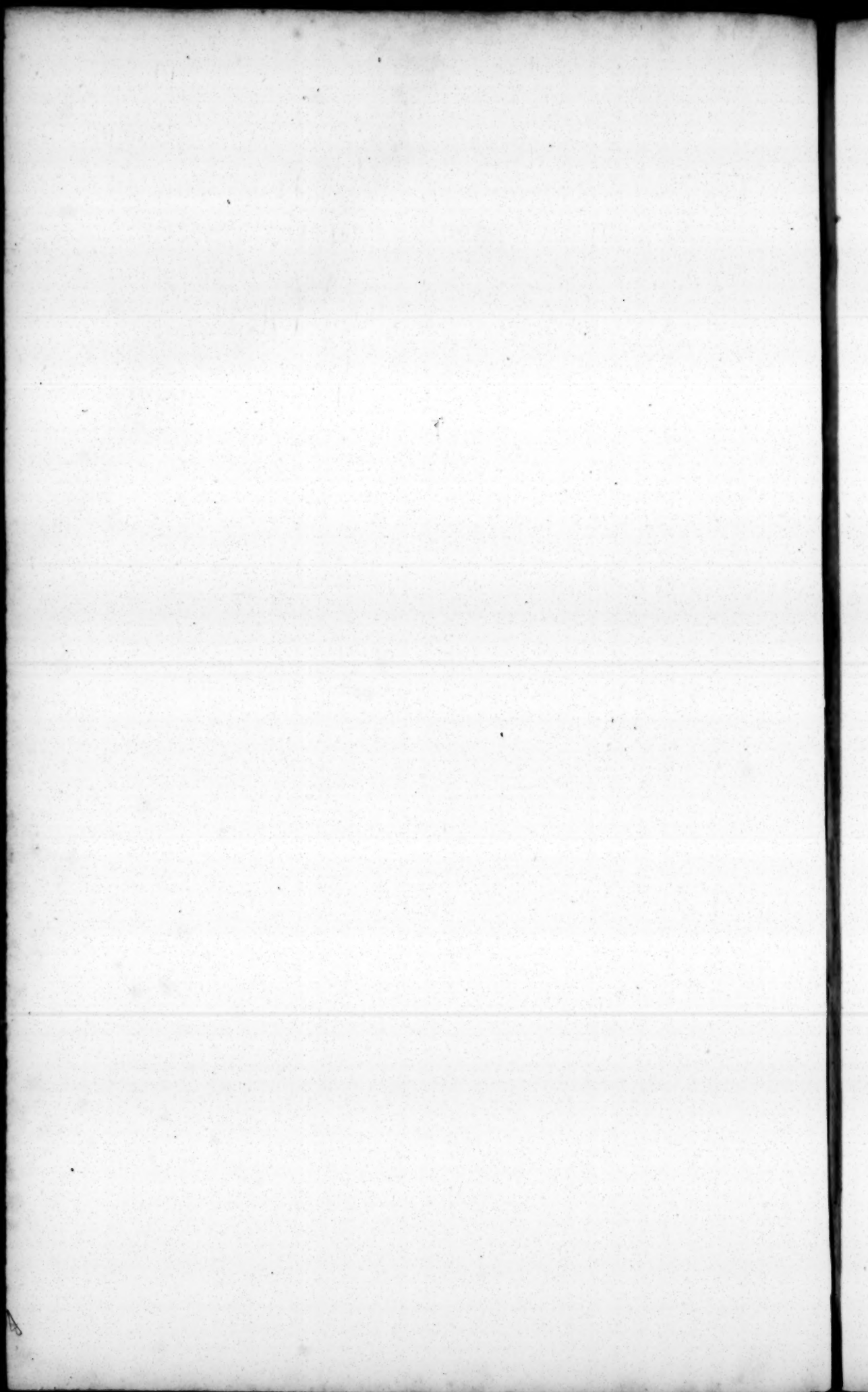
The truth which hath been asserted will teach us that we are sinners; for we have violated the holy law of GOD. Can we truly affirm, that we have never prophaned the name of the LORD? Have we always been in the spirit of prayer when invoking the supreme BEING in his temple? I fear that we have all, reason to adopt the humiliating acknowledgment, "Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips!" Have we always remembered the sabbath day to sanctify it? The nature of sabbath duty hath been in some degree explained; hath it been our endeavor, by the divine assistance, to perform that duty aright? Are we constant in our attendance upon the house of GOD, and all the ordinances of the divine appointment? Have we also paid a diligent attention unto the private observance of the LORD's day? Is it our invariable practice to pray with, and instruct our families? Do we on this sacred day of rest, devote ourselves to the service of GOD according as he hath given commandment? When we compare our practice with what we know the LORD requires, we must feel that we have sinned and come short of the glory of GOD. If we are so convinced, and are therefore enquiring with anxiety, "What must I do to be saved?" we have a ready answer. "Believe on the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and you shall be saved." "*He* is able to



save unto the uttermost them that come unto God by *him*, seeing that *he* ever liveth to make intercession for them."

We pray that God will be merciful unto us, and forgive us our sins; that he will send down his HOLY SPIRIT, to convert our souls; that he will so write his law in our hearts as to enable us, henceforth, to reverence his holy name, to remember the sabbath, day to sanctify it, and in his own good time, may he admit us to his kingdom and glory in heaven, there to celebrate an eternal sabbath, through our LORD JESUS CHRIST. Amen!





## LECTURE VIII.

---

EXODUS, chap. xx. ver. 12.

*Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the LORD thy GOD giveth thee.*

THIS is the first of the divine commandments which respects the reciprocal duties of humanity. It is a precept of peculiar importance, as the existence of domestic happiness, no less than the maintenance of that due subordination, so requisite to the peace and welfare of civil society, depend upon the observance thereof. Where unruly spirits display their strife and turbulence, domestic tranquility cannot dwell. Nor will those who fail in duty to their parents be remarkable for their obedience to magistrates, governors, or princes.

In order that we may comprehend the nature and extent of this precept, we must introduce the various interpretations of the term, "Father," as it occurs in holy scripture. We observe that this appellation, is referred unto GOD. It is written, "Have we not all one FATHER; hath not one GOD created



us?"\* And we are taught in the LORD's prayer, to address GOD as "OUR FATHER." This word is also applied unto those whose ministry GOD hath been pleased to bless, as a means of converting the soul. Saith the Apostle, "Though ye have ten thousand instructors in CHRIST, yet have ye not many fathers; for in CHRIST JESUS have I begotten you, through the gospel."† The word "father," is also descriptive of an earthly parent, which is its primary signification in the text. "Honour thy father and thy mother." We shall explain this precept with reference to our parents, our ministers, and our GOD.

First, With regard to our parents. This precept requires that we honour them, not merely by the outward shew, and profession of obedience, but by a ready compliance with all their just and lawful commands. In some cases, disobedience to parents may become a virtue. Our first duty is to GOD. We are bound, by every sacred obligation, to obey his will. Whatever interferes with our obedience to that must be disregarded, even though the voice of a parent should urge our compliance. This assertion will not be thought improper by those who recollect that our blessed LORD hath said, "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me."‡ It doth not follow hence, that a child may refuse to obey, merely be-

\* Mal. chap. ii. ver. 10      † 1 Cor. chap. iv. ver. 15.

‡ St. Matt. chap. x. ver. 37.

cause he judges the command of his parent improper. We would remind our young friends, that what they think improper, is often found to be right and fit. As yet their youth and inexperience render them incapable of forming a correct opinion; they must, therefore, necessarily submit to the guidance and instruction of others. And who is so likely to direct with affectionate care, to the best path, as a parent? In most cases their superior wisdom and prudence forbid a supposition that they err in judgment. And in every situation, parental love and tenderness compel us to believe, that the happiness and advantage of their children are what they desire to promote. Honour, therefore, your parents, by a cheerful performance of what they require, nor suffer the repining murmur of discontent to excite in their minds a suspicion that the performance of your duty is a painful task. If you thus grieve their hearts, you sin against GOD, who will by no means clear the guilty. This precept also enjoins that children provide for the maintenance of their parents, if need so require. Our blessed LORD severely reproved the Jews, because they had so explained this commandment as to release the child from the obligation of supporting his parents. He saith, "Full well do ye reject the commandment of GOD, that ye may keep your own tradition; for Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, If a man shall say it is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, he shall

be free ; and ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother. Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition which ye have delivered, and many such-like things do ye."\*

The Jews often devoted some part of their property as a corban, or offering, for the service of their temple. This practice, which, in its first institution, was truly excellent, they afterwards perverted to the basest purposes ; for, in their degenerate ages, if a man made a sacred oblation of that which should have maintained his wife or his parents, they affirmed, that he owed them no subsistence. So great was their impiety, that in order to elude the expence of maintaining their parents, they sometimes pretended to make a corban of their property when they really did not. The words of our LORD, which I have recited, were intended to reprove this nefarious practice.

We are also required to honour our parents, by a general perseverance in that line of conduct which is most likely to promote their comfort and happiness. An affectionate child will rather anticipate the desires of a parent, than remain inactive, till their order hath made his exertion a duty. He will be so studious of their inclinations, as to adopt that conduct which will preclude the necessity of a command. He will abstain from those persons, places, and objects, which

\* St. Mark, chap. vii. ver. 9 to 13.



are disagreeable to his parents, however pleasant they may be to himself; and he will comply with their wishes, however repugnant to his own sentiments. Thus will he strive by every possible exertion, to promote their happiness, from whom, under GOD, he derives his own existence. Such is the nature and extent of that duty which the child owes to his parents. It is most probable that those who examine themselves upon this subject, in a suitable manner, will find sufficient cause for remorse and contrition. May GOD grant them repentance unto life; may he confirm the tender mind of youth by the influences of his divine SPIRIT, and guide their feet in the way which leadeth to eternal life!

We are to contemplate the precept under present consideration with reference to the ministers of the gospel. Unto these, whom GOD is pleased to bless as the means of converting sinners, that expression, so often heard, "Fathers in CHRIST," is properly applicable. The duty we owe to them is thus described by St. Paul. He saith, "We beseech you brethren to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the LORD, and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake."\* You should not wound the spirits, or excite the alarm of your ministers, either by neglecting the sacred message they deliver, or by levity and

\* 1 Thes. chap. v. ver. 12, 13.

inattention, while they make known unto you the ways of life. They watch for your souls, and being desirous that you may be saved, they preach the word, they exhort and rebuke, in season and out of season. Their diligence claims your respect; their solicitude on your account merits your affection. At least you should recollect the assertion of St. Paul: "He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but GOD, who hath also given unto us his HOLY SPIRIT."\*

The word "Father," is frequently referred to GOD. The precept considered in this view, requires of us a constant and uniform obedience to the divine law. Men do not honour GOD by an ostentatious profession of religion, but by such a conduct as is agreeable to his revealed will. Saith our blessed LORD, "Herein is my FATHER glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."† And again, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your FATHER which is in heaven."‡ Those who can look up unto GOD as their reconciled FATHER, through CHRIST, will thus honour him. They are convinced that it is no more than their reasonable service. They recollect that their redemption was not accomplished by mere profession, but by actual obedience, suffering,

\* 1 Thess. chap. iv. ver. 8.      † St. John, chap. xv. ver. 8.

‡ St. Matt. chap. v. ver. 16.

and death. This recollection constrains them to use their utmost endeavour to glorify GOD in their body, and in their spirit, which are his. Would GOD that all who assume the Christian name, were such! This precept, then, "Honour thy father and thy mother," requires that our conduct towards our parents, be dutiful and affectionate; to our ministers, kind and attentive; to our GOD, submissive and obedient. The LORD enable us to comply with the requisition!

The text mentions a blessing we are to contemplate for our encouragement in the performance of this duty. "Honour thy father and thy mother, *that thy days may be long in the land which the LORD thy GOD giveth thee.*" These words, which were spoken to the Jews, assured them, that if they were obedient unto the divine law, their days should be prolonged in the enjoyment of that good land which GOD had promised to their fathers. We are rather inclined to think that this declaration principally refers to the present life; because death was the penalty denounced in case of disobedience to the command. It is written, "If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them; then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and to the gate of his place; and they shall say unto the elders



of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice ; he is a glutton and a drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones that he die ; so shalt thou put away the evil from among you, and all Israel shall hear and fear.\* Let the disobedient hear this and tremble. Though the penalty be not exacted by the arm of man, it very soon may by the mighty power of GOD, in whose hands are the issues of life and death. To all human appearance their hill may now stand strong ; length of days may seem to be written in their florid countenance ; yet they are not beyond the reach of GOD. He can instantly precipitate them into an untimely grave. And I will add, should they persist in rebellion, there is cause to fear that the divine wrath will shorten their days. Let them be obedient, and they shall live. If we consider the latter part of our text, as connected with that kindness and attention we owe to our “ spiritual pastors and masters,” it will be found expressive of the work of grace in the heart, which in the word of GOD is described as spiritual life. We have no intention to assert, that the work of grace cannot prosper in the soul, unless the minister be highly esteemed and honoured. But we apprehend that confidence and affection between the people and their minister, are necessary to the comfort and edification of both. They will exist, wherever GOD is pleased

\* Deut. ch. xxi, ver. 18 to 21.

to bless his word. In this case the people will look up to their teacher as a spiritual father; their affections will be drawn out towards him; his heart will be attracted to them, the church will be happy, yea it will increase, for the word of the LORD will run and be glorified in the salvation of many a precious soul.

If we consider the promised blessing with reference unto that obedience we owe to GOD as our FATHER, it is life. Not merely length of days in this world, but eternal life and glory in the world to come. Their days who honour GOD their heavenly FATHER, will probably be long in the land. An irregular and intemperate life will accelerate the period of dissolution. And it is said "that sinners shall be cut off;" that the "meek spirited shall possess the earth, and be replenished in the abundance of peace." Moreover, it is written, "Length of days is in her right-hand, and in her left-hand riches and honour."\* And again, "My son, forget not my law, but let thine heart keep my commandments; for length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add unto thee."† The language of St. Paul is to the same effect. He saith, "Godliness is profitable unto all things; having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."‡ But we have asserted that in

\* Prov. ch. iii, ver. 16.

† Ibid. ver. 1, 2.

‡ 1 Tim. ch. iv. ver. 8.

this view, the promise extends beyond the present life. It may be understood as having reference unto that state of blessedness prepared for the people of GOD, of which the promised land, alluded to in the text, was a type. I do not, however, mean to assert that our righteousness either does, or can confer upon us an absolute right unto the heavenly kingdom. Our only claim unto that, is derived from the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Yet our obedience to the will of GOD must be considered as the most proper evidence that we partake of his salvation. And it is said, "Without holiness, no man shall see the LORD." Believers are described "as elect, according to the foreknowledge of GOD the FATHER, through sanctification of the SPIRIT unto obedience."\* These shall attain unto eternal life. For it is written, "But now being made free from sin, and become servants unto GOD, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."† Such, then; is the nature of the blessing which the LORD hath been graciously pleased to connect with the observance of the precept before us, which is described as "the first commandment with promise."‡

From what hath been advanced, our youth may learn the nature and extent of duty to parents.

\* 1 Pet. ch. i. ver. 2.

† Rom. ch. vi. ver. 22.

‡ Eph. ch. vi. ver. 2.



Let them observe, that it consisteth not merely in profession, but in action; and that they are required diligently to perform the same. Let them honour their parents in the LORD; for his sake, which is right.

Let them hear what GOD saith of the disobedient. "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out; and the young eagles shall eat it."\* The denunciation of vengeance, as well as the precept, proceeds from GOD; who is able to destroy body and soul in hell fire. We must not, therefore, say within ourselves, we have met with many instances of disobedience, but we never observed that such a punishment followed as the result thereof. What, if the menace is to be spiritually understood, and should convey this idea, that GOD will deliver the disobedient into the hands of Satan, who as "a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour?" In this case, the consequence will prove truly awful. The eyes of the understanding will be darkened, the mind clouded, and entangled by sin; and the fearful end, destruction from the presence of the LORD, and the glory of his power.

These declarations of GOD's vengeance, are not recited to alarm, or distress; but to admonish our

\* Prov. ch. xxx. ver. 17.

youth. Let them avoid the evil, and they shall not incur the condemnation. If conscience reproves them as guilty, let them instantly apply unto JESUS, whose precious blood was shed for many, for the remission of sins.

We have this day set before you, life and death, blessing and cursing. Life and blessing in the way of duty; death and cursing as the just recompense of disobedience. Choose ye, which ye will have.

The duty which GOD requireth of you, hath been explained. Probably a conviction of your own infirmities, may cause you to say, who is sufficient for these things? To such a question we reply, our sufficiency is of GOD. The apostle saith, "I can do all things through CHRIST which strengtheneth me." Have recourse to this friend of the spiritually poor and needy. Approach with boldness unto his throne of grace, that you may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

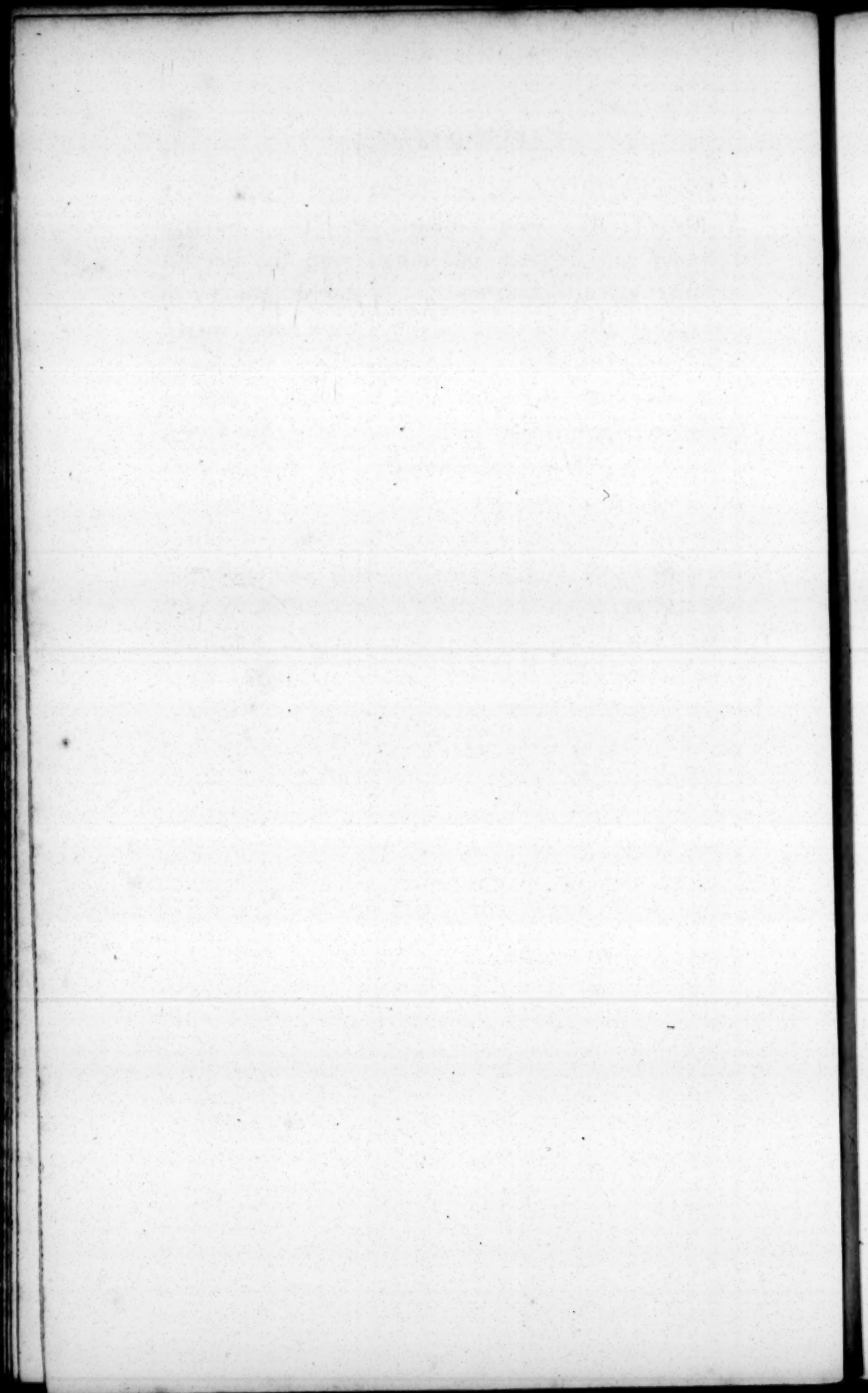
He saith, "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Know that his grace is sufficient for you; his strength shall be made perfect in your weakness.

Should we examine ourselves, only by that precept which hath been elucidated, we shall find cause to adopt the humiliating declaration of the Apostle;

“ We all have sinned, and fallen short of the glory of GOD.” We have violated this law. Such a reflection will impress our minds with the deepest humility and self-abhorrence. It may dispose us to adopt that affecting petition; “ LORD have mercy upon us; and incline our hearts to keep this law!” May this effect be produced in our souls. May we as sinners, be brought unto JESUS, the only SAVI-OUR! May we be made complete in *him*, who is the head of all principality and power. Then we shall not only hear, but obey the voice of GOD. Then shall we “ Honour our father and mother;” and relying upon the DIVINE faithfulness, we may expect our “ days to be long in the land which the LORD our GOD giveth us!”







## LECTURE IX.

EXODUS, chap. xx. ver. 13 to 15.

*Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not commit adultery;  
thou shalt not steal.*

IN his epistle to the Romans, St. Paul makes the following very peculiar observation; “ I had not known,” that is, perceived or been sensible of “ sin; but by the law.”\* Men will never experience a real conviction of sin, until the SPIRIT of GOD hath revealed the divine law in their hearts. Then they will adopt the language of the same writer, “ I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.” Once I vainly thought myself alive unto GOD, but when the LORD taught me the pure and spiritual nature of his law, I became sensible of the power of sin within me, perceived its malignity, and then all my hopes of attaining life by my own obedience vanished; I discovered the wickedness of my nature, and thus “ I died.”

The natural corruption, and spiritual ignorance

\* Rom. ch. vii. ver. 7.

of men may be inferred from the precepts of the divine law. He must indeed be depraved, who can forsake the one living and true God; profane his sacred name, and serve his own abominable lusts. What a proof of ignorance does he give, who worships a graven image; acknowledges as his God, a stock, or a stone, which his own hands have fashioned; offers up his prayers and his praises unto that which as it hath neither life nor power of exertion, cannot in the least assist him. Well is it said of those places where such a practice is found; "Surely darkness hath covered the earth, and gross darkness the people." "They feed on ashes; a deceived heart hath turned them aside, so that they cannot deliver their souls, nor say, is there not a lie in my right-hand?" When we read the precepts contained in the text, we are constrained to say, how great is that depravity which hath given just cause for such prohibitions! Is man then indeed so lost, that to deter him from the commission of murder, a command must be given whose awful penalty is death? Are his passions so depraved, that the authority of heaven must interpose to refrain him from the foul crime of adultery? Hath he so little respect for his neighbour's property, that to secure it from his depredations, God must prohibit the act? He is worse than this. For the corruption and wickedness of human nature are not only such as to require these mandates, but even to overleap the sacred barrier, and trample under foot every one of the divine commandments,



Let not the observation be thought too severe. Look into the world; observe the manners of men. You will then perceive that the assertion is rather less than the truth. You will see vice triumphant, and religion scorned by the majority as unworthy their regard. You will find that each saith to himself, I shall have peace, though he walketh after the imaginations of his own evil heart. We pray GOD to interpose; and cleanse the thoughts of every heart, by the inspiration of his HOLY SPIRIT!

We shall explain the commandments we have recited in their regular order. May GOD open our eyes that we may see wondrous things out of his law."

The first precept which requires our attention is,

"Thou shalt not kill."

We are here forbidden to deprive a fellow creature of life. There is somewhat in the commission of murder so repugnant to humanity, that I trust there is no great necessity to enforce the prohibition in this respect. It is proper, nevertheless, that we be cautioned against those evil dispositions of envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. These are the seeds of murder. They terminate in deeds of bloodshed. We shall soon detest the man we envy. The desire to remove a detested object is natural. And if such a desire be suffered to prevail, we shall not

long be scrupulous as to the means of his removal. Watch, therefore, against such dispositions. Recollect that he who indulges them, is in the eye of heaven a murderer; for it is written, "Whosoever hateth his brother, is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."\* The stain of blood was soon brought upon the earth. The first man ate of the forbidden fruit. His eldest son, under the influence of envy and hatred, slew his brother. When I read, "Thou shalt not kill," I am surprized at their conduct who wilfully and deliberately make themselves the cause of untimely death to many thousands. War may be, and no doubt, frequently is a necessary evil; yet I confess I could not choose to be the person who should wantonly draw the sword, or prevent its being sheathed in the peace restoring close. There is every reason to suppose that such are, in the sight of GOD, answerable for all who shall be thereby slain.

The command to respect the life of a fellow man, hath equal authority as a prohibition of that horrid, yet prevalent crime, self-murder. This is a sin which precludes all possibility of salvation. The goodness of GOD may favor him with an opportunity of repentance, who hath deprived his fellow of life. But the act of suicide, terminates the season of grace, and presumptuously intrudes the sinner into

+ 1 John, ch. iii. ver. 15.

the presence of God. He who is guilty in this respect, appears thus to address his maker : Thou hast dealt unjustly with me ; thou hast laid upon me more than I was able to bear ; and I had no way of escape from an intolerable weight of misery, except by shortening my existence. I now stand before thee, and I defy the utmost extent of thy wrath. Some persons represent this desperate conduct as an indication of courage. To me, I confess, it appears an evidence of extreme cowardice. A man of true courage will continue at his appointed post, he will not basely forsake it at the time of danger. What would you think of that officer, who should desert his station upon the enemy's approach? You would judge it right that his life should atone for his desertion. If the motives of those who have committed this sin be enquired after, we shall find that fear and false shame were predominant. One hath committed crimes by which his life is forfeited to the laws of his country. He cannot bear to be exposed as a public sacrifice to offended justice ; and therefore finds it convenient to elude the sentence of the law, by becoming his own executioner. How much better had he been ashamed to commit the crime which exposed him to such a penalty ! Another hath dissipated his property at the gaming table. He has perhaps a numerous offspring ; and hath lived in what the world calls an elegant manner. He is ashamed to meet his injured family. He desires to maintain his usual appearance ; but cannot, and there-



fore hath recourse to suicide, that he may avoid the scandal of poverty inflicted by vice. And a third, more despicable than either, in order to preserve what men call honour, exposes himself to the dreadful necessity either of being murdered, or becoming a murderer. Had these persons been ashamed of the crimes they committed, as to have refrained therefrom, they might have lived in respect, the ornament and blessing of society.

The precept which forbids us to lift the hand of violence against our bodily life, is perhaps capable of a more extensive application. For surely, if it be unlawful to kill the body, it is much more to destroy the soul. This is done by the indulgence of corrupt inclinations; by the love of the world, the inordinate desire of riches, and an eager pursuit after carnal pleasures. Hast thou considered, O sinner, that by transgression thou "losest thy own soul?" Art thou not aware that the punishment denounced against sin, is no less than to "be cast into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death?" If, therefore, thou desirest that thy spirit may for ever live with God in glory, we advise thee to abstain from sin; and we assure thee, that shouldst thou continue an unconverted character, "without doubt, thou shalt everlastingly perish."

I am about to plead a cause which I know will expose me to the charge of great preciseness and

singularity. I mean that of GOD's creatures, the beasts in the field. We read that "GOD feedeth the young ravens that call upon him." All his creatures wait upon him, that he may give them their meat in due season, for his mercy is over all his works. We shall not therefore err greatly if we consider the sixth commandment as prohibiting that wanton cruelty which the brute creation so often experiencé. Upon many occasions I have seen that noble and useful creature the horse, treated in the most barbarous manner; and I have thought, that it would be an act of justice to make the inhuman wretch suffer in his own person, that cruelty he exercises upon a much nobler animal. The same reflection hath likewise occurred to me respecting those creatures we are permitted to slay for our sustenance. It hath reminded me of St. Paul's assertion, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now." It may well groan and travail in pain, when it experienceth such cruel oppression from the tyrant man. It is written, "the merciful man is merciful to his beast." We may be assured that GOD will one day bring those to a severe reckoning who manifest a contrary disposition. For he shall have judgment without mercy which shewed no mercy. As I have entered upon this subject, duty constrains me to bear a decided testimony against those fashionable, though cruel and therefore wicked, amusements of hunting and shooting. It is urged that the exercise is healthful and pleasant. To this

we may reply, that the exercise and health are attainable, without the cruelty of pursuing an affrighted though innocent animal, till in the experience of one death, it hath suffered the torture of a thousand. To those who can assert the pleasure thereof, I shall say, that mind which can delight in misery and death, must be depraved indeed.

If it be said, they were formed for our use and sustenance, I shall reply, true ; but at the same time must add, that I have repeatedly perused the gracious charter which allows unto man the use of animal food, but it does not appear to contain any thing which justifies the murder of them for sport, and amusement. Let me recite the grant. Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you ; even as the green herb have I given you all things, but flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall you not eat.\* Doth this permission give the least countenance to cruelty toward the brute creation, doth it authorize men to destroy them merely for their own pleasure ? Certainly not. In the confirmation of this right, afterwards given to the children of Israel, we observe the same thing. Thou mayest kill and eat flesh in all thy gates whatsoever thy soul lusteth after, according to the blessing of the LORD thy GOD which he hath given thee ; the unclean, and the clean may eat thereof as of the roebuck and of the hart. Only ye shall not

\* Gen. chap. ix. ver. 4.



eat the blood; ye shall pour it upon the earth as water.\* You may kill for food, not for pleasure. However,

“ Of this enough—but if the Sylvan youth,  
Whose fervent blood boils into violence,  
Must have the chace; behold, despising flight  
The rous’d-up lion resolute and slow,  
Advancing full on the portended spear.  
See the grim wolf, on him his shaggy foe  
Vindictive fix, and let the ruffian die.  
Or growling horrid, as the brindled boar  
Grins fell destruction, to the monster’s heart  
Let the dart lighten from the nervous arm.  
These Britain knows not, give ye Britons then  
Your sportive fury pitiless to pour  
Loose on the nightly robber of the fold:  
Him from his craggy winding haunts unearth’d  
Let all the thunder of the chase pursue.”†

It is requisite to offer a few observations upon the prohibition of blood as an article of food, which occurs in those portions of scripture we have recited. The following reflections appear to make it of perpetual authority. First, That Noah and his family, unto whom the use of animal food was first permitted, were expressly forbidden to eat blood. Second, That when the same privilege was afterwards conceded to the Jews, it was accompanied by a similar restriction. And Third, That long afterwards, when the Apostles wrote to the Gentile church, releasing them

\* Deut. chap. xii. ver. 15, 16.      † Thomson's Seasons.

from all obligation to regard the ceremonial law, they repeated by the authority of GOD, the same prohibition. We shall introduce their decision. It seemed good to the HOLY GHOST, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things. That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, *and from blood*, and from things strangled, and from fornication, from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well.\*

Such is the nature and extent of the precept: Thou shalt not kill. The penalty denounced against the disobedient, is death. It is written, "Surely your blood of your lives will I require, at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man, at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of GOD made he man.† Should those who have violated this command die impenitent, they will be cast into outer darkness where is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth."

If we examine our own hearts respecting this prohibition as it hath now been explained, we shall probably be convinced that we have in some respect transgressed. If so, we may adopt the prayer of David, "Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O GOD, thou

\* Acts, chap. xv. ver. 28, 29.    † Gen. chap. ix. ver. 5, 6.

GOD of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.\*

The next precept unto which our attention must be directed is this, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." Our blessed LORD hath thus explained this commandment, "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart."† How pure and extensive is the divine law? It requireth that even the heart be void of offence.

This injunction forbids all manner of uncleanness; especially the prevalent sin of fornication, to the commission whereof many youth are indebted for injured property, a ruined constitution, and an untimely grave. Their licentious conduct too well justifies the poet's assertion.

"They seem, if judg'd by their expressive looks,  
Deeper in none, than in their surgeon's books."‡

We must here introduce the language of the wise monarch. "The commandment is a lamp,

\* Psalm, li. ver. 14.

† St. Matt. ch. v. ver. 27, 28.

‡ Cowper.



from all obligation to regard the ceremonial law, they repeated by the authority of GOD, the same prohibition. We shall introduce their decision. It seemed good to the HOLY GHOST, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things. That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, *and from blood*, and from things strangled, and from fornication, from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well.\*

Such is the nature and extent of the precept: Thou shalt not kill. The penalty denounced against the disobedient, is death. It is written, "Surely your blood of your lives will I require, at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man, at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of GOD made he man.† Should those who have violated this command die impenitent, they will be cast into outer darkness where is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth."

If we examine our own hearts respecting this prohibition as it hath now been explained, we shall probably be convinced that we have in some respect transgressed. If so, we may adopt the prayer of David, "Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O GOD, thou

\* Acts, chap. xv. ver. 28, 29.    † Gen. chap. ix. ver. 5, 6.

GOD of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.\*

The next precept unto which our attention must be directed is this, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." Our blessed LORD hath thus explained this commandment, "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart."† How pure and extensive is the divine law? It requireth that even the heart be void of offence.

This injunction forbids all manner of uncleanness; especially the prevalent sin of fornication, to the commission whereof many youth are indebted for injured property, a ruined constitution, and an untimely grave. Their licentious conduct too well justifies the poet's assertion.

"They seem, if judg'd by their expressive looks,  
Deeper in none, than in their surgeon's books."‡

We must here introduce the language of the wise monarch. "The commandment is a lamp,

\* Psalm, li. ver. 14.

† St. Matt. ch. v. ver. 27, 28.

‡ Cowper.

and the law is light, and reproofs of instruction are the way of life to keep thee from the evil woman; and from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman. Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids. For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread; and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life. Whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding; and he that doeth it, destroyeth his own soul. A wound and dishonour shall he get, and his reproach shall not be wiped away.\*" The penalty denounced against the violators of this law, is death. It is written, "The man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer, and the adulteress, shall surely be put to death."† Were this punishment inflicted, the crime of adultery would not so much prevail among us. Saith the Apostle, "Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."‡ And God saith, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay."

The last command which requires our present attention, is "Thou shalt not steal."

This injunction requires that we know and

\* Prov. ch. vi. ver. 23, to 26, 32, 33. † Lev. ch. xx. ver. 10.

‡ Heb. ch. xiii. ver. 4.



respect the sacred claims of our neighbour's property. It prohibits us, either by open violence, or secret artifice, to possess ourselves of another's right. It is, therefore, as much pointed against those scandalous arts of fraud and deception to which so many have recourse, as against open theft. He is less a villain, who with crape and pistol robs upon the highway, or under the covert of silent night, plunders his neighbour's dwelling, than he, who under the specious appearance of honesty, either defrauds or imposes upon his fellow. The LORD hath prohibited this conduct. It is written, "Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him; the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning."\* Moreover it is said, "Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land, within thy gates. At his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it, lest he cry against thee unto the LORD, and it be sin unto thee."† All those who withhold from others that which is their due, commit a species of robbery. But this commandment will admit of a more extensive application. If to withhold his due from a fellow creature be a species of theft, what must it be to deny the same unto GOD? Such a conduct is described in holy scripture, as a robbery of GOD. It is written, "Will

\* Lev. ch. xix. ver. 13.

† Deut. ch. xxiv. ver. 14, 15.

a man rob GOD? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, wherein have we robbed thee?" That is, produce if you can an instance of this conduct. The reply is, "in tithes and offerings." Not merely in the payment of those tithes, or the offering of those sacrifices which the law requires; but in that conformity of our heart and life unto the divine will, which is said to be "a sacrifice well-pleasing and acceptable to GOD." The conclusion of the verse is very awful. "Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation."\* Whatever is done in opposition to the revealed will of GOD is a robbery of him. It is withholding from him the honour due unto his name. It is perverting his property which we all are, from its legitimate use, to the service of Satan.

The penalty annexed to the breach of this precept, considered with reference to our neighbour's property, is thus declared. "If a man shall steal an ox or a sheep, and kill it, or sell it, he shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep. If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die, there shall no blood be shed for him. If the sun be risen upon him, there shall be blood shed for him; for he should make full restitution. If he have nothing, then shall he be sold for his theft. If the theft be certainly found in his hand alive, whether it

\* Mal. ch. iii. ver. 8, 9.

be ox, or ass, or sheep, he shall restore double." It is also said, " If a man shall deliver unto his neighbour money or stuff to keep, and it be stolen out of the man's house, if the thief be found, let him pay double."\* If we consider the command with reference to GOD; the penalty is more awful. He who disobeys it, will incur his displeasure, who is " able to destroy body and soul in hell fire."

We have endeavoured to explain in a scriptural manner, the nature of those precepts contained in our text; and we have also faithfully exhibited the fatal result of an habitual neglect thereof. We cannot close our Lecture without recommending self-examination with regard to each of them. With respect to the first, " Thou shalt not kill," What is the report of conscience, guilty or not guilty? We trust that your hands are not defiled with human blood; we pray GOD to keep them clean. But have we never indulged those hurtful lusts which " drown men in perdition?" Have we never experienced nor indulged sentiments of malice and revenge? Saith our blessed LORD, " Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill, and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say unto you, whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother,

\* Exod. ch. xxii. ver. 1 to 4, and 7.



Raca, shall be in danger of the council ; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.\* Awful words to the guilty ; are we such ?

Again, with respect to the next commandment : “ Thou shalt not commit adultery.” You have heard our LORD’s explanation of it ; Doth conscience acquit us ? Can we truly say, I am clean ?

Lastly, with regard to the prohibition, “ Thou shalt not steal,” Are we guiltless in this respect ? Possibly an internal principle of honesty hath kept us from an open violation of our country’s laws ; hath taught us to regard as sacred, our neighbour’s property. But have we been always studious to render unto each his own ; “ tribute to whom tribute is due ; custom to whom custom ; fear to whom fear ; honour to whom honour is due ?” Have we abstained from the unworthy arts of fraud and deceit ? Have we constantly lived in obedience to the will of GOD ? There is not one who can truly say, I have not offended. Blessed be GOD, there is mercy for penitent sinners. JESUS CHRIST died for the salvation of such ; and “ he is able to save unto the uttermost them that come unto GOD by him.” Unto him therefore let us have immediate recourse. *He* will not cast out any who come unto him. He saith, “ Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the

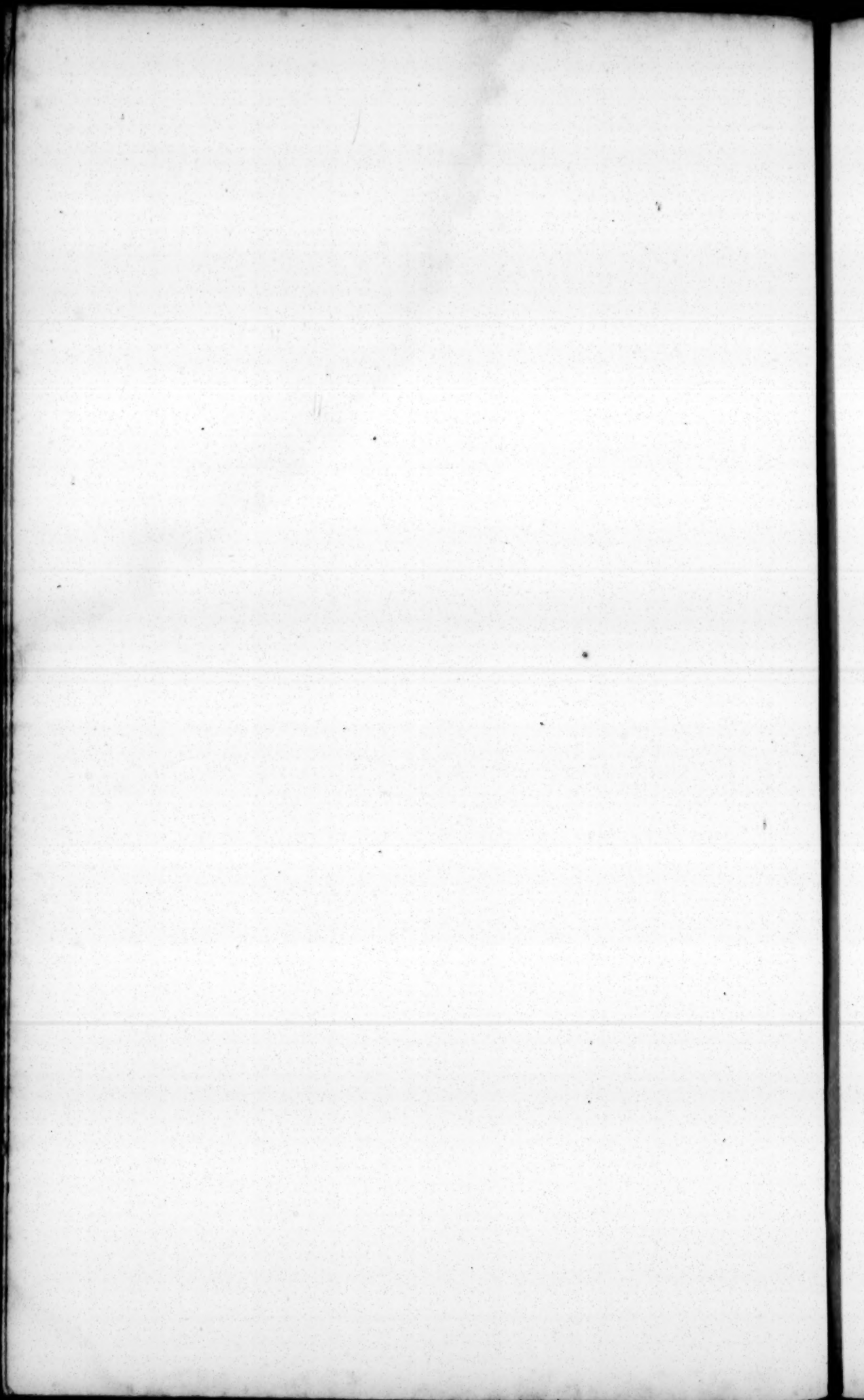
\* St. Matt. ch. v. ver. 21, 22.

waters ; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat ; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price."\*

May it please G O D to make us a willing people in this day of his grace and power ; may he convert our souls, and bring us forth in the path of righteousness, for his name sake !

\* Isaiah, ch. lv. ver. 1.







## LECTURE X.

EXODUS, chap. xx. ver. 16, 17.

*Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour ;  
Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou  
shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife ; nor his man-  
servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his  
ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbours.*

WE have often admired that fine expression of the Psalmist, " the law of the LORD is perfect." The more we contemplate this sacred law, the brighter views shall we obtain of its absolute perfection. We shall thus learn how well calculated it is, both to direct our conduct, and as " our schoolmaster, to bring us unto CHRIST." For by convincing us of our sinful and helpless estate, it teacheth our need of a SAVIOUR ; and by its holy precepts, shews us how we ought to glorify the GOD of our salvation. The commandments we have recited, direct how we should regulate our conversation and deportment towards our neighbours. The former requires that we speak nought but the truth concerning them. " Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour." If called upon to give a judicial testimony respecting

their character, let it be done with sincerity and truth, nor let us dare to assert any thing which we do not ourselves know to be the fact. For in some cases, the life, in all the welfare and happiness of our neighbour, are concerned. There are too many who to promote their own advantage, will not only speak an untruth, but even confirm it by an oath! In our courts of judicature, indictments for wilful and corrupt perjury are by no means uncommon. This is an awful sign that the days are evil. To utter a falsehood is base; but a solemn appeal unto the God of truth, to establish a wilful lie, is a most horrible act of wickedness.

This injunction doth not merely forbid us to bear false witness in a court of justice. It likewise prohibits all slander and misrepresentation of the truth. It is written, "Thou shalt not raise a false report; put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness."\* We must not be concerned either in the fabrication of falsehood, or in the diffusion of scandal. We should have no intercourse with those whose language is "report, and we will report again." How many imaginations, and I may add tongues, would be at a loss for employment, were this precept duly regarded? In modern societies, the histories and characters of neighbouring families are

\* Exod. ch. xxiii. ver. 1.

the ordinary subjects of conversation; and often, most is said concerning those of whom the least is known. Characters are censured and degraded; conduct and conversation misrepresented; wilful falsehoods are asserted, and whole families are condemned without an opportunity of defence. Such a conduct hath in it peculiar malignity and wickedness. It is base and cowardly in the extreme. If you object to the character or conduct of your neighbour, it is your duty with candor and affection, to acquaint him with your objection. Thus you will afford him an opportunity either to justify his conduct, or retract his error. Thus will you act as GOD commands. *He saith, "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; and if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother: but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."\** The commands of GOD, and the conduct of men are greatly at variance. So far are they from first relating to their brother in private, his fault, that they take care he shall hear it the last, and that in the most public manner. Thus like

\* St. Matt. ch. xviii. ver. 15 to 17.



base assassins, they stab his reputation. The unconscious sufferer mingles in society, is surprised at the averted countenance, and contemptuous neglect of those around him; and is at last broken-hearted to hear, that the friend he fostered in his bosom, the man in whom his confidence was placed, hath been the viper by whose envenomed touch, his character, and consequently his comfort, hath been destroyed. Oh, had I power, I would expel these monsters from that society of which they are the bane; I would compel them to abide in solitude till they should learn to cease from slander and calumny!

We should ever be upon the watch against those who would engage our time and attention, by relating the concerns or describing the characters of others. The wise monarch hath described such persons, and taught what we must expect, if they receive from us the least encouragement. He saith, "the words of a tale-bearer are as wounds; and they go down into the innermost part of the belly."\* And it is written, "As a madman who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death, so is the man that deceiveth his neighbour and saith, Am not I in sport? Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out; so where there is no tale-bearer the strife ceaseth. As coals are to burning coals, so is a contentious man to kindle

\* Prov. ch. xviii. ver. 8.

strife.\* Such persons, by their officious interference engender strife where divisions were never before known; where, but for them, mutual concord and harmony would prevail. They augment those differences which unhappily subsist, and oppose reconciliation by obstacles which are almost insurmountable. Let those, therefore, who desire to preserve domestic and social happiness, discard all such characters from their society.

The ninth commandment is intended to restrain every species of falsehood. No character is either more dangerous or more despicable than a liar. The vice of lying will not admit of palliation; he, therefore, who is habitually guilty thereof, is base and unworthy. The precept before us prohibits not only a lying testimony in the presence of the judge, but likewise all scandal and untruth. It is sanctioned by the most awful penalties. It is written, "If a false witness rise up against any man, to testify against him that which is wrong, then both the men between whom the controversy is, stand before the LORD, before the priests, and the judges that shall be in those days. And the judges shall make diligent inquisition; and behold, if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother, then shall ye do unto him as he had thought to have done unto his brother; so shalt thou put away the evil from among you." Were

\* Prov. ch. xxvi. ver. 18 to 21.

this salutary law to be now enforced, we should not have so many instances of perjury. Indeed the sacred writer saith, “those which remain, shall hear, and fear, and shall henceforth commit no more any such evil among you.”\*

If the precept before us be considered as a prohibition of slander and calumny, *it* is sanctioned by the menaced displeasure of GOD against the offender. Saith the Psalmist, “What shall be given unto thee, or what shall be done unto thee, O thou false tongue? sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper.”† And again, “Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit; thou sittest and speakest against thy brother, thou hast slandered thine own mother’s son. These things thou hast done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself; but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes.”‡ The LORD may appear for a season not to observe the conduct of his enemies; and they, because his vengeance doth not instantly come upon them, think themselves secure from all his arrows. Such will, however, find that forbearance is no acquittal. The most HIGH “will bring into judgment every work, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil.” “Then shall the right aiming thunderbolts go abroad, and from the

\* Deut. ch. xix. ver. 16 to 20.

† Psalm, cxx. ver. 3, 4.

‡ Psalm, l. ver. 19 to 21.



clouds, as a well-drawn bow, they fly unto the mark ;” for GOD will surely reprove the wicked.

The crime and curse of the slanderer are thus delineated in *holy scripture*. “ Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs ; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully, thou lovest evil more than good, and lying rather than to speak righteousness. Thou lovest all devouring words ; O thou deceitful tongue. GOD shall likewise destroy thee for ever. He shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling place, and root thee out of the land of the living.”\* If we consider this commandment as prohibiting the practice of that unmanly vice, lying, the penalty denounced against the transgressors is equally awful. It is written, “ but the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idoaters, *and all liars*, (whosoever loveth and maketh a lie) shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”† May the LORD take from us the way of lying, and cause us to make much of his law !

The precept we are next to explain, is “ Thou shalt not covet thy neighbours’s house ; thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife ; nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant ; nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour’s.

\* Psalm, lii. ver. 2 to 5.

† Rev. ch. xxi. ver. 8.

This command requires that we do not covet, that is, desire the possession of our neighbour's house. The mansions of the rich, their splendid and convenient abodes, appear desirable in the sight of many. They would gladly obtain that inheritance for themselves. Such a desire is a sin against GOD. O man, be thine habitation poor as it may, and thine abode comfortless, yet hast thou much cause for thankfulness, none for envy. The worst of earthly dwellings is more than thou canst claim by just desert. Look around, observe, what numbers, with even superior merit, have not so many comforts as thyself. And to silence thy murmurs, recollect, that when thy SAVIOUR, who is "GOD over all, blessed for ever," dwelt among men upon earth, he had no settled habitation. For he saith, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the SON of man hath not where to lay his head."\* If thine heart be right with GOD, thou wilt not perceive any thing in thy neighbour's house that thou shouldest covet it. In a short time thou wilt require no other chamber than a coffin; no apparel except a winding sheet and shroud; no other abode than the grave. But if thou must be ambitious of a splendid and magnificent residence, elevate thy thoughts above this world, and covet earnestly that "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, whose builder and maker is GOD." The LORD excite such a desire in thine

\* St. Matt. ch. viii. ver. 20.

heart! We are also forbidden to covet our neighbour's wife. How lost must he be to those noble sentiments which are the best ornament of humanity, who can indulge so base a desire! And what must we think of that female, who deaf to the voice of conjugal and parental affection, can listen to the smooth speeches of a base seducer! Let the reproaches of conscience be their punishment; when that shall awake, great will be their misery. In the sight of GOD, he who covets his neighbour's wife is as much an adulterer as he who actually seduces her. "The LORD seeth not as man seeth. For man looketh on the outside; but the LORD looketh upon the heart." Neither may we covet our neighbour's servants. If we observe that they are diligent and attentive, honest and courteous, we should rejoice that our neighbour is well served; not wish for his servants, and much less should we attempt to seduce them by the prospect of emolument. This precept likewise enjoins that we do not covet either the cattle of our neighbour, or any of his property. Such is the frailty of human nature, that when we walk through pastures enriched by the bounteous hand of heaven, and behold the numerous flocks and herds grazing the tender herb, we desire the possession of them. And too often this desire is productive of unjust and dishonest practices. He who would maintain his integrity, must, by the help of GOD, watch over and restrain the wandering desires of the heart. If these are once allowed, they will soon impel us to



the commission of all iniquity. If our neighbours prosper, we should rejoice with them, and give thanks to God on their behalf; we ought not to behold them with an envious eye, as if we thought their success too great; or could desire them less prosperous than ourselves might be more so.

Accursed thirst of gold; unto what wickedness hast thou given existence! Thou hast sharpened the assassins poignard. Thou hast mingled the deadly poison; thou hast severed the ties of blood and natural affection; thou hast rendered man more cruel to his fellow creature, than the fiercest of the savage tribes can be to each other. Impelled by thee, forth comes the nightly thief. Locks, bars, bolts, and the certainty of an ignominious death, if detected, are of no avail against him; rather than his covetousness shall be disappointed, he will lift the murderous steel against the defenceless life of sleeping innocence. Other vices have "slain their thousands, but thou hast destroyed thy tens of thousands." Why shouldst thou, O man, covet gold, or earthly possessions? They may injure, but they cannot assist thee. Thou wilt soon be extended on the bed of sickness and death. In that dread hour, when thy parting spirit is hovering upon the confines of eternity, what advantage can thou derive from an earthly treasure? It can neither diminish thy pangs, nor protract for one moment thy fleeting existence. But if acquired by unworthy means; if employed in the service of sin,

it will greatly aggravate the sorrows of that dark moment. Thou must after death appear at the judgment seat of CHRIST. Thy riches will not plead for thee in *his* presence; nor can they procure thine admission into the heavenly kingdom. Cease then from covetousness. Learn to be content with such things as thou hast; trusting in the goodness of GOD, who hath said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." And know that if thou art blessed with the enjoyment of the LORD's favor, thou art richer than the greatest monarch can be without it; even though a cottage with bread and water be all thy earthly treasure.

St. Paul intimates that the tenth commandment is designed to controul every evil inclination of the human heart. He saith, "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? GOD forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law; for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in *me all manner* of concupiscence."\* How could sin produce this effect by the commandment, unless it were designed to restrain all such concupiscence? The pure and perfect nature of the divine law forbids us to doubt the fact. Such is the extent of this precept.

The penalties, which guard the other command-

\* Rom. ch, vii. ver. 7, 8.

ments, certainly sanction this; and the same awful malediction is pronounced against those who shall dare to violate either of them. In the case of Achan, the sin of covetousness was punished with death. Some perhaps will say, we have always understood that he was executed for theft. But he declares that covetousness was the cause of that theft; for "Achan answered Joshua and said, Indeed I have sinned against the LORD GOD of Israel: and thus, and thus have I done. When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then *I coveted* them and took them."\* Look not upon the world, nor parley with her when she appears smiling and attractive; at that time fly, or thou art undone. Beware of covetousness; it was the ruin of Achan; and if thou givest place thereunto, it will destroy thee. It is written, "He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house." Wo to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his own house, that he may set his nest on high; and that he may be delivered from the power of evil." And when the Apostle enumerates those sins which exclude men from the kingdom of GOD, he mentions this in the black catalogue. He saith, "For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, *nor covetous man who is an idolater*, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of CHRIST and of GOD. Let no man deceive you with vain words; for because of these things the

\* Joshua, ch. vii. ver. 20, 21.



wrath of G<sup>OD</sup> cometh upon the children of disobedience."\* Such are the fatal consequences which result from rebellion against this law of the L<sup>ORD</sup>.

We must recommend a serious and impartial self-examination upon the subjects which have been discussed. The ninth commandment forbids us to bear false witness, to slander, and to lie. Doth conscience accuse us as guilty in either of these respects? I trust we have been preserved from the horrid sin of perjury; but have we never spoken unadvisedly respecting a neighbour? Have we taken care that all our reports of others were founded in truth? Have we never spoken disrespectfully of a fellow creature to gratify our own petulance? In all our conversation, have we preserved an inviolable regard to the truth? Have we never been guilty of intentional deceit? Who can say I am innocent, I have not offended? We have cause to adopt the publican's cry, "G<sup>OD</sup> be merciful to me a sinner!"

The tenth commandment is designed to restrain all covetousness, to bridle every impetuous lust. Have we never beheld with an envious eye, the prosperous condition of our neighbour? Have we never coveted his goods? Have we always been studious to mortify the corrupt inclinations of an unsanctified heart? On the contrary, have we not, to the utmost of our power, endeavoured to gratify them? Have we not been content to live in

disobedience to GOD, though we could not be satisfied till all our craving lusts were indulged? Concerning these things we are indeed guilty?

At the close of our Lectures upon the ten commandments, this humiliating reflection occurs; we have in some respect or other violated every one of them. We have sufficient reason to adopt that prayer, "LORD have mercy upon us, and write all these thy laws, in our hearts we beseech thee!" As transgressors of the divine law, we are exposed to the penalty it denounceth against sin; we are under the curse. How sad, then, is our case. Thank GOD it is not desperate. There is a REDEEMER; ONE who "came to seek and to save that which was lost. He saith, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." If we refuse his invitation, we are undone. I trust, however, that we shall not so act. To whom should the sinner make application, but to the SAVIOUR? Where should he go for pardon and peace, except unto HIM whom GOD hath "exalted a PRINCE and SAVIOUR, to give repentance and remission of sins?" May GOD incline our *hearts* to receive the blessed JESUS; may *he* pardon all our iniquities, and give us grace to walk before *him* in righteousness and true holiness all the days of our life!



## LECTURE XI.

PSALM, ii. ver. 11.

*Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.*

THE Psalm which containeth these words, refers to the kingdom of CHRIST; and it describes the violent opposition which HE should experience from them *he* came to seek and to save,

“ Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel against the LORD, and against his anointed; let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.” Whatever men undertake in contradiction to the will of GOD, is vain and nugatory; for his counsel shall stand, *he* will do all his pleasure. Yet even the great and mighty of the earth were sufficiently weak to embark in so futile an expedition. They united in defiance of the divine authority, they strove to counteract the purposes of GOD. Among these was the emperor Julian, who is distinguished in history by the term “ apostate.” This prince, before his exaltation to



the imperial dignity, was professedly a Christian. No sooner was he seated upon the throne, than he became an avowed pagan, and violent opposer of the gospel. He attempted, in defiance of our blessed LORD's prediction, to rebuild the temple of Jerusalem. To accomplish this undertaking, he spared neither pains, nor expence. But the Apostate was disappointed. For "while the labourers were engaged in the work, on a sudden, dreadful balls of fire broke out from the ground where the foundations were laid; and consuming the works, made the place inaccessible, so that he was compelled to relinquish his design." How vain a thing it is to oppose GOD! His enemies shall be destroyed. It is related, that a Christian once insolently questioned by an heathen philosopher who was intimate with Julian, "What he thought the Carpenter's son might be employed in?" replied, "Know thou wretch, that the GOD who made heaven and earth, whom in contempt thou callest the carpenter's son, is preparing a coffin for thy disciple Julian." Very soon after this, the apostate emperor was mortally wounded. He is then said to have caught in his hand the blood as it flowed from his wound, which he threw up into the air with these remarkable words, "Thou hast conquered, O Galilean!" Thus was he compelled to acknowledge in death, the power of that anointed ONE, whose predictions he had attempted to invalidate. Saith the Psalmist, "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the LORD shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his

wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure; yet have I set my KING upon my holy hill of Zion." You have made great exertions to prevent the accomplishment of my purposes; you have set yourselves in array together against the establishment of my kingdom; but notwithstanding the efforts of your malevolence, I have seated my SON upon his throne, and *he* shall reign for ever and ever." "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the SON, lest he be angry, and so ye perish from the right way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that trust in *him*." Admonished by the destruction of others, make your submission unto the LORD's anointed; the king of saints. Acknowledge him as your LORD and your GOD. So shall you be blessed with the enjoyment of his favor upon earth, and the possession of his glory in heaven. "Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling."

In the prosecution of our Lecture upon these words, we shall adopt the following method.

First, We shall endeavour to explain the nature of that duty to GOD which is here required.

Second, We will contemplate the dispositions of mind with which this duty must be performed; "with fear and trembling."

Third, We shall direct you unto *him* from whom alone cometh the will and power to do that which is right, that you may thus “ serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.”

May the DIVINE presence sanctify our meditation upon these important subjects !

First, We are to explain the nature of that duty to GOD which is here required.

Two things are here introduced as constituting our duty towards GOD ; service, that is, obedience and joy. The obedience unto GOD which is here required consists, first, in the belief of his holy word and gospel, with a chearful submission to the same. St. Paul saith, “ GOD is my witness, whom I serve with my SPIRIT in the gospel of his SON.”\* That is, whose gospel I believe, and whom I obey as the preacher and apostle of his word. Faith in CHRIST is a duty we owe unto GOD. It is written, “ This is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his SON JESUS CHRIST.”† And again, “ Without faith it is impossible to please GOD.‡ We infer from these scripture declarations that the obedience of faith to the glorious gospel, is part of our duty towards GOD. The obedience named in

\* Rom. ch. i. ver. 9.

† St. John, ch. iii. ver. 23.

‡ Heb. ch. xi. ver. 6.



the text is also expressive of that homage which we owe unto JEHOVAH as our CREATOR and PRESERVER. In the sacred writings the word "serve" is frequently applied to the act of religious worship. It is recorded of one Anna, who was a prophetess, that "she departed not from the temple, but *served* GOD with fastings and prayers, night and day."\* And the Psalmist saith, "Confounded be all they that serve graven images; worship *him* all ye gods."† As we are nourished by the bounties of *his* DIVINE PROVIDENCE, in *whom* we live, and move, and have our being, it is our duty, at least, to offer up our daily supplications for the continuance of our blessings. And if we have a proper sense of the mercies we have received at the hand of GOD; our grateful hymns of praise will constantly ascend to the *giver* of every good and perfect gift. *He* saith indeed, "Offer unto GOD thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the most HIGH; and call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth me; and to him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I shew the salvation of GOD."‡

The service which the text requires is likewise expressive of that conformity in heart and life unto the divine will, which every believer should strive to

\* St. Luke, ch. ii, ver. 37.

† Psalm, xcvi. ver. 7.

‡ Psalm, l. ver. 14, 15, 23.

maintain. Saith the Apostle, "I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of GOD, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to GOD, which is your reasonable service."\* This conformity unto the divine commandments, is not only to be exemplified upon some certain occasions, or in a few particular actions. It must be general. Saith our blessed LORD, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your FATHER which is in heaven."† To persevere in such a conduct is our duty, and surely if our hearts are sanctified by grace it will be our practice. It is written, "the grace of GOD which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men; teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world."‡

The text requires that our service of GOD, be enlivened by an humble joy in him. We find many similar exhortations in the sacred writings. Saith the Apostle, "Rejoice in the LORD alway, and again I I say, rejoice."§ Many of those who now go on their way weeping, may think this a difficult command. They see great cause of sorrow, and perhaps feel but little disposition to rejoice. Yet have such a right to be thankful; they shall come again with joy, and bring their sheaves with them. "Blessed are they that

\* Rom. ch. xii. ver. 1.

† St. Matt. ch. v. ver. 16.

‡ Titus, ch. ii. ver. 11, 12.

§ Philip. ch. iv. ver. 4.

mourn, for they shall be comforted." If we contemplate the various blessings which the LORD hath conferred upon us, we shall find in them the most ample cause for joy and gratitude. It is *he* that hath made us, and not we ourselves. He hath given up his SON to death for our salvation. If we have received CHRIST as our SAVIOUR, it is by the working of *his* mighty power ;" and we trust that *he* will keep us through faith unto salvation. To those who are thus distinguished by the divine mercy, the Psalmist saith, " Rejoice in the LORD ye righteous, for praise is comely for the upright."\* If they who under the influence of the SPIRIT of adoption are enabled to address GOD as their reconciled FATHER through CHRIST JESUS our LORD, do not rejoice in him, who will, and who indeed can? Their joy shall be in the LORD. Praise is comely for them. Being justified by faith, they have peace with GOD through the dear REDEEMER. They are truly blessed, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. And shall not such characters rejoice in the LORD? Yea, they will. For the apostle saith, " Whom having not seen, ye love; in *whom*, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory; receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."† Such is the nature of that duty to GOD which the text enjoins. If we recur to the Catechism which describes our duty towards GOD,

\* Psalm, xxxiii. ver. 1.

† 1 Pet. ch. i. ver. 8, 9.



we shall observe its perfect harmony and concord with what hath been advanced upon the subject. Saith our text, "Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling." The nature of the service here required is spiritual. It consisteth in a belief of the gospel, the worshipping of GOD in the act of prayer and praise; the serving *him* with an uniform obedience to *his* commandments, and rejoicing before *him* from a grateful sense of *his* unbounded goodness. Saith our Catechism, "My duty towards GOD is to believe in him, to fear him, and to love him with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength. To worship him, to give him thanks, to call upon him; to honour his holy name and his word, and to serve him truly all the days of my life."

This beautiful summary of the commandments in the first table, which respect our duty to GOD, includes each of those subjects we have introduced. Faith was spoken as part of the service which the LORD requireth; here we are taught to say, "My duty towards GOD is to believe in *him*." And it is written, "He that cometh to GOD must believe that *he* is, and that *he* is a rewarder of all them that diligently seek *him*."\* In the same manner we speak of religious adoration. Here we acknowledge that worship is our duty to GOD. And holy scripture saith,

\* Heb. ch. xi. ver. 6.

“Thou shalt worship the LORD thy GOD, and *him* only shalt thou serve.”\* An holy obedience unto the divine commandments was also mentioned as included in the service we owe the great CREATOR. Saith our Catechism, “My duty towards GOD is, to honour *his* holy name and *his* word, and to serve *him* truly all the days of my life.” The inspired word saith, “Observe, and hear all these words which I command thee, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee for ever; when thou doest that which is good and right in the sight of the LORD thy GOD.”† Lastly, we asserted, that to rejoice and be thankful before GOD is our duty. We are taught in this part of the Catechism, “to give *him* thanks,” and the Psalmist saith, “O give thanks unto the LORD, for *he* is good, because *his* mercy endureth for ever.”‡ These observations may convince us, that those who wrote this part of the Catechism, imbibed their sentiments from that pure fountain of *truth*, “the word of GOD.” O Britain! thou hast great cause for thankfulness to the MOST HIGH. Thy constitution hath been, yea, is now, the admiration and envy of surrounding nations. Thou hast long been blessed with the light of the gospel. Thy forms of prayer reverberate to the throne of grace, those exceeding great and precious promises which are contained in *holy writ*; and thy youth are taught “a form of sound words,”

\* St. Matt. ch. iv. ver. 10.      † Deut. ch. xii. ver. 28.

‡ Psalm, cxviii. ver. 1.

which; under GOD, may lead them to the land of everlasting life. The LORD give thee wisdom to know, in this thy day, the things which pertain to thy peace!

Secondly, We are to contemplate the dispositions of mind with which our duty to GOD must be performed, “with fear and trembling.”

We are then to “serve the LORD with fear.” Not with a slavish and oppressive terror, as though GOD were an hard “task-master;” but with the affectionate apprehension of a dutiful child, who, while he desires to honour, is fearful lest he should appear presumptuous. With such a disposition our whole duty to GOD should be performed. Under the influence thereof, we should by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let our requests be made known unto GOD. For though we are taught to come boldly unto the throne of grace; yet we are commanded to “let not our heart be hasty to utter any thing before GOD, for GOD is in heaven, and we upon earth; our words, therefore, to *him* must be few.” A proud and self-confident spirit must be peculiarly offensive when displayed in our prayers. Our blessed LORD hath described and reprov'd this sad temper of mind in the following instructive parable. “Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, the other a Publican. The Pharisee stood,” his position expressing the pride of his heart; and prayed thus, “GOD I thank thee, that I am not



as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers." It is right to be thankful that we are preserved from the ways of sin ; but it is highly condemnable to mention our fellow creatures in our prayers, either for the purpose of censuring them, or as a foil to display our own superior excellence. "*Or even as this Publican.*" Proud and vain, what hadst thou to do with the publican ? Who made thee his judge, or enabled thee to inspect his heart ? " I fast twice in the week ; I give tithes of all that I possess." What a display of presumptuous insolence ! How remote from that fear with which we are commanded to serve the LORD ! Here are no acknowledgements of guilt, no supplications for mercy, no petitions for supporting grace. In short, we discover in this address, little more than a vain glorious exhibition of negative virtues ; and of this scanty obedience, we have no other proof than the affirmative of a proud Pharisee, upon which much dependance cannot be placed. " And the publican standing afar off, would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven ; but smote upon his breast, saying, " GOD be merciful to me a sinner !" A truly affecting and humble prayer. It could only proceed from an heart oppressed with a sense of guilt, and desirous of pardon from the mercy of GOD. Let me add, we have all sufficient reason to adopt the same petition ; for " we have all sinned, and come short of the glory of GOD." " I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other ; for every one that exalted himself shall be

abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.\* We should discover a similar frame of mind in the whole of our obedience to the commandments of GOD. Works of piety and godliness must not be performed in an ostentatious manner, “to be seen of men;” but with modesty and self-diffidence to the glory of the LORD. We are likewise commanded to “rejoice with trembling,” with reverence and humility. The joy which a believer hath in the LORD, is not of a violent tumultuous nature. It is gentle, mild, serene. It must not, therefore, be expressed in a turbulent clamorous manner. He who can “rejoice in the LORD,” knows the immense distance there is by nature, between GOD and himself. He is conscious how much his own transgressions have augmented that distance. He admires the divine condescension, as manifested in the free pardon of all his iniquities, and in those communications of grace with which he is favoured. Sensible of his great imperfections, he feels that these are all unmerited blessings; so that while he rejoices in GOD as his reconciled FATHER, through the LORD JESUS CHRIST, a conviction of his own unworthiness, humbles him, as it were, in the dust, and thus mingles reverence with joy. Our earthly enjoyments are insecure. Our brightest day may soon be darkened by interposing clouds; and we know that this world is rather a vale of tears, than an abode of joy. We

\* St. Luke, ch. xviii. ver. 10 to 14.

ought, therefore, to “rejoice,” not with insolence, as though our hill could never be removed, but “with trembling;” that so we may be prepared against the rising storms of adversity and sorrow. Such are those dispositions with which duty towards GOD should be performed. May the LORD impart them unto every soul!

Third, We are to direct you unto *him*, from whom alone cometh the will and power to do that which is right; that you may be enabled to “serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.” Saith our blessed LORD, “without me, ye can do nothing.”\* And it is also written, “Work out your own salvation, with fear and trembling; for it is GOD that worketh in you, both to will, and to do of his good pleasure.”† Those, therefore, who are desirous of strength for the performance of duty, must apply unto the LORD JESUS CHRIST; for “in *him* dwelleth all the fullness of the GODHEAD bodily.”‡ “*He* is able and willing to do for us exceeding abundantly more than we can ask or think.” Strengthened by his SPIRIT’S might in the inner man, we shall be enabled to glorify GOD by an obedience to his righteous will; we shall “serve with fear, we shall rejoice with trembling.” One saith, “I can do all things through CHRIST which strengtheneth

\* St. John, ch. xv. ver. 5.      † Philip. ch. ii. ver. 12, 13.

‡ Col. ch. ii. ver. 9.

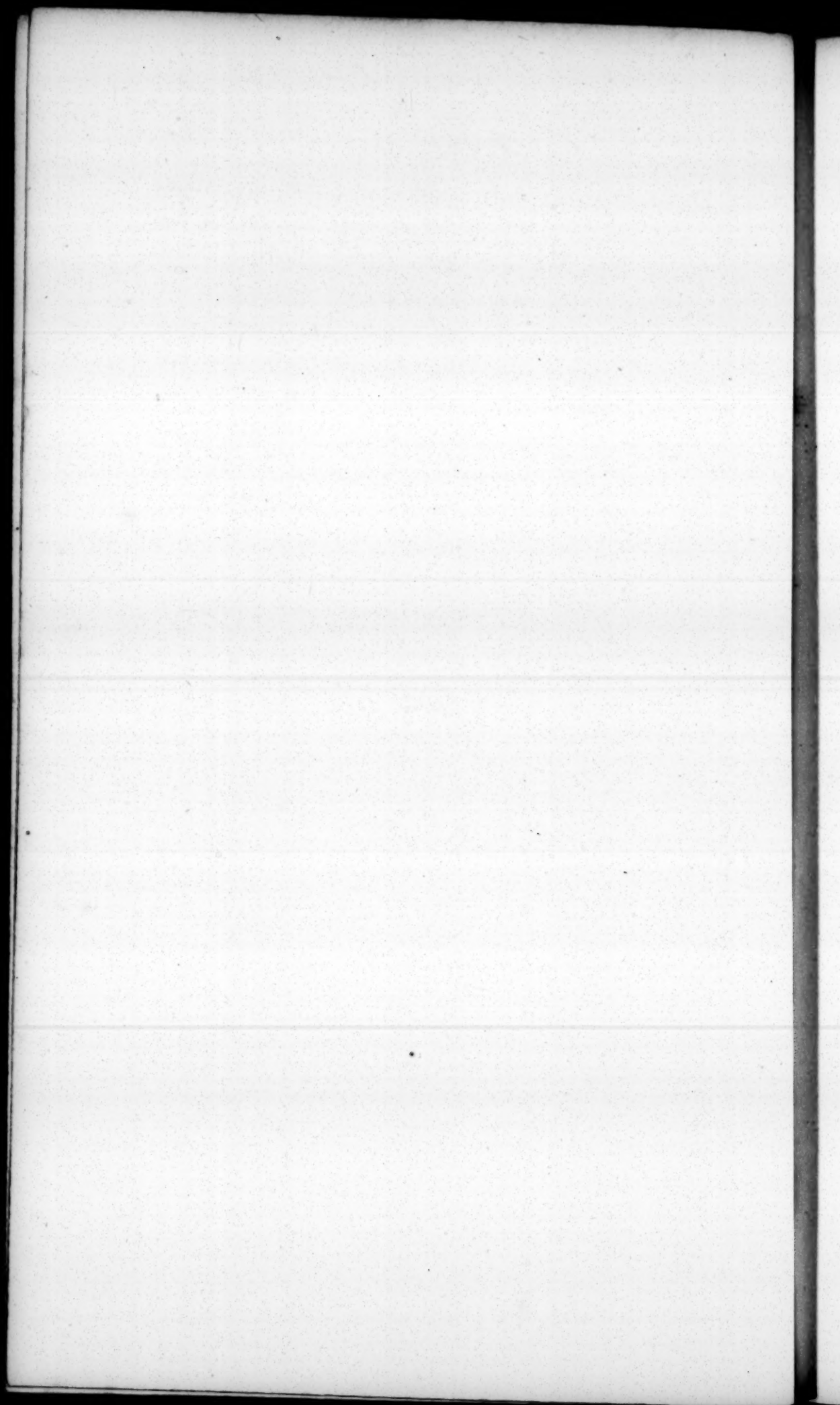


me ;” and the word of the SAVIOUR to his afflicted servant was, “ My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” To *him*, therefore, we refer you ; in *his* name we invite you ; come unto *him* all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and *he* will give you rest. Take *his* yoke upon you, and learn of *him*, for *he* is meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls ; for *his* yoke is easy, *his* burden is light. He saith, “ Ask, and ye shall receive ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth ; and he that seëketh, findeth ; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.”\* Approach the throne of grace in meek dependance upon the divine word. You need not fear a repulse, for “ *he* is faithful that promised ; *he* also will do it.” How extensive is our duty towards GOD. Have we endeavoured to perform the same ? Do we, with the heart, believe the gospel unto righteousness ? Do we worship GOD in spirit and in truth ? Are we in the habit of daily invoking *his* great name ? Do we offer unto *him* the sacrifice of righteousness ? Doth our heart rejoice in *him*, while our mouth praiseth *him* with thankful lips ? Do we thus “ serve the LORD in fear, and rejoice with trembling ? May we “ have grace, whereby we may serve GOD acceptably, with reverence and godly fear ; for our GOD is a consuming fire.” Have we applied unto the LORD JESUS

\* St. Matt. ch. vii. ver. 7, 8.

CHRIST by prayer and supplication, that his grace may be given us? If hitherto we have not, let us do it now. May *he* look upon us in mercy. May GOD dispose our ways towards the attainment of everlasting salvation, so that among the changes and chances of this mortal life, our hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. Amen.







## LECTURE XII.

ST. MATTHEW, chap. vii. ver. 12.

*Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even to them; for this is the law and the prophets.*

THE gospel of our LORD JESUS CHRIST is a system of free grace, and of holiness. The salvation therein proclaimed, is offered to sinners “without money, and without price.” They are invited to partake of this marriage supper, and to wear the wedding garment, without any cost to themselves; and at the same time they are taught, that having believed in GOD, they must be careful to maintain good works. The Apostle saith, “By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of GOD. Not of works, lest any man should boast; for we are his workmanship created in CHRIST JESUS unto good works, which GOD hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”\* Hence every believer in JESUS CHRIST is an holy character. “Being made free from sin, and become

\* Eph. ch. ii. ver. 8, 9, 10.

the servant of GOD, he hath his fruit unto holiness." The morality of the gospel is of the purest and most extensive nature. It requires that we glorify GOD in our body and in our spirit which are *his*; and commands that we regulate our conduct towards our neighbour, by that standard which we desire they should respect as the rule of their behaviour to ourselves. We must not have one weight whereby we purchase, and another whereby we sell. But in all respects, "Whatsoever we would that men should do unto us, even so must we do to them; for this is the law and the prophets." It is the substance of the duties enjoined by the law, and enforced by the prophets. It will be perceived, that we have selected the text with reference to that part of the Catechism which inculcates our duty towards our neighbour. To explain and enforce this duty, are the objects of our present Lecture. We are taught in holy scripture, not only to consider as neighbours, our friends, relations, or those who dwell near us, but the whole human race. A certain lawyer stood up, and tempting the SAVIOUR, said unto *him*, "Master, What shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, what is written in the law; how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the LORD thy GOD, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live. But he,

willing to justify himself, said unto JESUS, And who is my neighbour? And JESUS answering, said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jerico, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead." We are here introduced to a real object of compassion. A traveller deprived of his property, and well nigh of his life, by the hands of cruel ruffians. Here, as in a glass, we may discern our own spiritual condition. Sin and Satan are the *thieves* which beset mankind. They strip him, they despoil him of his best garment; his innocence. Not so content, they wound him, they leave him dead in trespasses and sin. "And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side." While then the sufferer lay bathed in his own blood, he hears the sound of approaching feet, and expects that relief is at hand. It is a priest of the LORD; surely he will have compassion on him. No, he passes on the other side, affecting not to see the distressed object. At this period, when the poor man was ready to despair of help, there came a Levite, a minister of the sanctuary, whose office it was to relieve the distressed. He looks upon him; contemplates the unhappy sufferer; and in whose fainting heart hope once more rekindles her fires. But ah, how great his disappointment. For though his naked body,



mangled by cruel hands, and all his bleeding wounds, so loudly pleaded for assistance, yet this hard-hearted Levite, having gratified his curiosity, left him there to perish.—May we not from hence infer the incompetence of the law as a means of salvation?—As the priest and Levite gave no aid to their distressed countryman, so that dispensation of which they were ministers did nothing effectual for the removal of man's spiritual misery. We read, “It is not possible, that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.”\* And it is also written, that “the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.”†.

As the wounded traveller lay despairing of help, and at the point of death, a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. From him he could expect no pity. For there was no intercourse between the Jews and the Samaritans. Yet where he had no hope, there he obtained effectual assistance. “When he saw him, he had compassion on him; and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine; and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.” Nor was this the extent of his kindness. “For on the morrow, when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take

\* Heb. ch. x. ver. 4.

† Ibid. ch. vii. v. 19.

care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." In the conduct of the benevolent Samaritan, we discern a strong resemblance to the gracious interposition of our LORD JESUS CHRIST in behalf of ruined man. The Apostle saith, "When we were yet without strength," that is, in an helpless state, "in due time CHRIST died for the ungodly\*." Our LORD thus applied the parable; "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy unto him. Then said JESUS unto him, Go, and do thou likewise†." We are then to consider all men as our neighbours, and most especially the sons and daughters of affliction. With reference therefore unto all mankind, the REDEEMER saith, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." The duty which these words enjoin, is thus explained in the Catechism: "My duty towards my neighbour is to love him as myself, and to do unto all men as I would they should do unto me." Here the general principle whereby we should be actuated in all our dealings with mankind is asserted, according to the scriptures: for it is written, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."‡ The effects which this divine principle will produce are delineated with equal accuracy. For it is added, "To love, honour,

\* Rom. ch. v. ver. 6.      † St. Luke, ch. x. ver. 25 to 37.

‡ St. Matthew, ch. xix. v. 19.

and succour my father and mother; to honour and obey the King, and all that are put in authority under him; to submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors, and masters; to order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters." These words assert our duty to parents, governors, instructors, and superiors. Our parents we are required to love, honour, and succour. These things are enjoined by the fifth commandment. We are also commanded to honour and obey the King, with all that are put in authority under him. This duty hath recently fallen into much disrepute and neglect. It is, however, as much enforced in holy writ as any other branch of that obedience which the LORD requireth of us. It is said, "Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk." These were the most inveterate and artful enemies which our blessed LORD had to oppose. They were ever studious to find some occasion against him; and after a due consultation, among themselves, they sent out unto him their disciples, with the Herodians, saying, "Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of GOD in truth, neither carest thou for any man; for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us, therefore, what thinkest thou, Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cesar or not?" This question, and the address connected with it, are alike artful. The latter is well calculated to remove every suspicion of deceit; the former is of the most ensnaring tendency. Had our blessed LORD replied, To give tribute is not lawful,



his enemies would have represented him to government as a teacher of sedition and rebellion. Had he asserted that the payment of tribute was lawful, they would have reported him to the people as desirous to enslave them, and a favourer of the Roman tyranny. But the holy JESUS could not be thus entangled. He had a mouth and wisdom which none of his adversaries could gainsay or resist. He saith unto them, "Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Shew me the tribute-money. And they brought unto him a penny; and he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? They say unto him, Cesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Cesar the things which are Cesar's, and unto GOD the things which are GOD's. When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way."\* Thus did the omniscient REDEEMER frustrate the malice of his enemies. He taught them their duty to superiors, and gave them to understand that it is connected with obedience to GOD. We shall recite the following precept of the sacred volume, because it is connected with our present subject. "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the LORD's sake." Be conformable to the laws and customs of the country wherein you live, so far as such conformity is agreeable to the revealed will of GOD: and that, not merely from motives of human policy, but for the sake of JESUS, who became obedient unto

\* St. Matthew, ch. xxii. ver. 16 to 22.

death for your salvation. "Whether it be to the King as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of GOD." This duty is not enforced by a mere human authority; it is the will of GOD, that with well doing ye put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. That, by a submissive and obedient conduct, you silence their malicious reports who represent you as disaffected to government, and ready to promote all attempts to subvert the constitution. Act therefore "as free, as persons who are delivered from the bondage of corruption, not as if exempt from submission to the laws of their country; and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of GOD, honour all men, love the brotherhood; fear GOD, honour the King. Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.\*" Say not within yourselves, my master is churlish, his orders are unreasonable, and therefore I will not obey them; but remember the character he sustains; and consider who commands your obedience. Such are the scripture doctrines upon this important subject. He who reproveth GOD by a wilful disregard of them, shall certainly answer for it at the judgment of the great day. We are thus instructed as to that conduct we should adopt towards the rest of mankind: "To hurt no body by word or deed; to be true and just in all

my dealings ; to bear no malice nor hatred in my heart, to keep my hands from picking and stealing ; my tongue from evil speaking, lying, and slandering. To keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity ; not to covet or desire other men's goods, but to learn and labour truly, that is, honestly to get mine own living, and to do my duty in that state of life unto which it shall please GOD to call me." The scripture directions upon these subjects, are expressed in nearly the same language. It is written, " Let all bitterness and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice ; and be ye kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another ; even as GOD, for CHRIST's sake, hath forgiven you."\* It is also said, " Let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief ; or as an evil doer, or as a busy body in other men's matters.†" St. Paul also saith, " For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat." How many must perish with hunger were this just law strictly executed ! " For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all ; but are busy bodies. Now them that are such, we command and exhort, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread."‡ That is, the bread which they have earned by honest industry. For the LORD will suffer no drones in his spiritual hive. His peo-

\* Eph. ch. iv. ver. 31, 32.

† 1 Pet. ch. iv. ver. 15.

‡ 1 Thess. ch. iii. ver. 10, 11, 12.



ple are placed in their respective situations by his divine providence; and they should perform, with diligence and activity, the duties which these may require. You will observe, that Catechism inculcates our duty towards our neighbour, in language similar to that wherein the *holy* scriptures speak upon the same subject. The line of conduct here described, is that which we desire others should pursue in all their intercourse with ourselves. It therefore becomes us to give the example. For we know who hath said, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets."

Let us advance a few considerations to enforce the performance of this duty. The first consideration which occurs, is this: We expect and desire, that in all their dealings with ourselves, men should know and respect the line of duty. We should be careful to do the same with regard to them. Those who deviate therefrom, cannot hope that others will preserve it. He who oppresses and deceives, will in his turn be deceived and oppressed. He who acts with integrity, shall experience a similar return. Saith our LORD JESUS CHRIST, "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom; for with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again."\* Similar to this, is

\* St. Luke, ch. vi. ver. 38.

the caution given by St. Paul, "If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another."\*

The next consideration which occurs to enforce the performance of our duty towards our neighbour is thus stated in the text; "for this is the law and the prophets." This is the sum and substance of what GOD requires, in his law, and by the ministry of his servants the prophets. He whose conduct is regulated by the sacred precept we have explained, will thus most effectually perform the duties enjoined by the last six commandments. This reflection will greatly influence the mind of a real christian. Such characters are desirous of a more perfect conformity unto the divine will. They can only expect the accomplishment of this desire in a diligent use of the means of grace. It is written, "then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD." Let those, therefore, who would grow in the knowledge and love of GOD, whose object is to glorify *him*, walk in his ways with redoubled zeal and activity. "For herein is our heavenly FATHER glorified, that we bear much fruit."

We may likewise enforce the performance of this duty, by observing, that the neglect thereof will destroy the general happiness of mankind. Proud,

\* Gal. ch. v. ver. 15.

selfish, and inflexible dispositions, are the bane of domestic happiness. Where each studies his own advantage, neglecting the general welfare, tranquility cannot exist. The same horrid tempers destroy the peace and comfort of public society. Men are self-interested in their views. If they can promote their own private advantage, they have but little respect for the public good. Hence so many are dissatisfied with their own situation in life. They thirst after power and profit; and therefore, were those offices which are connected therewith, occupied by an angel from heaven, they would murmur, and even accuse him of an unjust administration. Such dispositions have produced the most tremendous evils. It is recorded in the annals of our native land, that men actuated thereby, have murdered their Sovereign, and deluged their country with the blood of its inhabitants. The same accursed leaven still works in the minds of too many. Were they triumphant, what extensive desolation we might justly apprehend! If we direct our attention to a neighbouring kingdom, we shall see what awful effects are produced by the neglect of these reciprocal duties. Where are their sabbaths? Annihilated. Where the ordinances of GOD once found among them? Cast aside as useless, "to the moles and to the bats." Where the temples of the LORD? They are profaned. Yea, the language of the Psalmist is truly applicable, "They have burnt up all the synagogues of GOD in the land, we see not our signs;



there is no more any prophet, neither is there among us any that knoweth how long.”\*

O LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, if it be thy will to punish this guilty nation, let the sword, the famine, or the pestilence pass through the land ; but save us, we pray thee, from the power of ungodly men, who would throw down thine altars ; trample under foot thine everlasting gospel, deprive us of our dearest privileges, and make this our fruitful land a desolate wilderness. Confound their devices ; and strike them in thy mercy with compunction and remorse, to the salvation of their souls ! If you desire the prosperity of your highly favoured country, walk in obedience to the commandments of GOD. “ Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.”

The last observation we shall make upon this subject is, that obedience to the precept contained in the text, is the most proper display of our gratitude to GOD for redeeming love ; and the most satisfactory evidence that we live under the influence thereof. Our blessed LORD saith, “ Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.” And again, “ By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another.” Your profession intimates that you are followers of the lowly JESUS. Esta-

\* Psalm, lxxiv, ver. 8, 9.

blish the validity of your claim to this high character, by conformity unto his holy will. “ He went about doing good.” He was mild, gentle, forbearing. “ When he was reviled, *he* reviled not again; when he suffered, *he* threatened not.” “ Go and do ye likewise.” He hath said, “ Not every one that saith unto me, LORD, LORD, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my FATHER which is in heaven.” “ Now this is the will of GOD, even your sanctification.” May this will be accomplished in every heart.

If we compare what GOD requires as our duty towards our neighbour, with our own dispositions and practices, we shall find cause for sorrow and humiliation. “ In many things we offend all.” Thank GOD, that “ if any man sin, we have an advocate with the FATHER, JESUS CHRIST the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins.” May *he* be our advocate! May we obtain through *him* the pardon of our sins, and the renewal of our nature; that we may glorify him by an obedience unto his commandments. Thus alone, shall we walk agreeably to that word which saith “ Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them. For this is the law and the prophets.”



## LECTURE XIII.

PSALM, lv. ver. 22.

*Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee.*

“**M**AN is born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards.” His days are few and full of sorrow. He finds, even in the midst of enjoyment, somewhat which seems to say, care is nigh at hand. The wisdom and goodness of GOD are displayed in this circumstance. Were it otherwise, we should be so strongly attached to this world, that the thought of a removal therefrom would be exceeding painful; we should be so well satisfied with present enjoyment, as wholly to neglect the means of attaining future, even eternal comfort. As it is, men are so enamoured of the present life, so much engaged in its concerns, that they bestow little care on the future; but how much more should we see this, could they now enjoy constant prosperity and ease. It must be remembered, that though this world is “a vale of tears,” “an house of mourning,” yet it is not a scene of comfortless woe. For if trials and afflictions do abound, full and rich consolations are equally abun-



dant. We are directed to seek these by diligent and earnest prayer. Saith the Apostle, "Is any afflicted? let him pray."\* Let him approach unto the throne of the divine grace; he shall find it occupied by a God who heareth and answereth prayer. The Psalmist experienced this. His sorrows are recorded in the psalm before us. He saith, "My heart is sore pained within me; and the terrors of death are fallen upon me. Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me; and horror hath overwhelmed me. And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove; for then would I flee away, and be at rest. Lo then would I wander afar off, and remain in the wilderness; I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest."† These expressions denote exceeding great and heavy sorrows. There were some peculiar circumstances which aggravated the distress of the sacred writer. He saith, "It was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it. Neither was it he that hated me, that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him. But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company."‡ To suffer wrong from an avowed enemy, is painful to the mind; but when a person from whom we have every reason to expect

\* St. James, ch. v. ver. 13.

† Psalm, lv. ver. 4 to 8.

‡ Psalm, lv. ver. 12 to 14.

an affectionate conduct, when he, whom the heart can honor with the endearing appellation of friend, becomes unkind and unjust, it is indeed oppressive to the soul. When Cæsar was attacked in the senate house by a band of assassins, he defended himself with extraordinary valour; till at length, beholding among them Brutus, to whom he had been a parent, with a dagger in his hand, he was so affected at his monstrous ingratitude, that he struggled no more; but pathetically exclaimed, "What, my son Brutus! and thou too?" He was more keenly sensible of the injury he sustained, because it was inflicted by the hand of a friend.

The verses we have read, remind us of the REDEEMER. He was betrayed by one disciple, denied by another. He is also said to have received "wound in the house of his friends."

Under this aggravated distress, the Psalmist thus declares his resolution of applying unto GOD for deliverance. "As for me, I will call upon GOD, and the LORD shall save me. Evening, morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud; and he shall hear my voice."\* He received that answer from GOD which his faith taught him to expect; and hath left upon record the following grateful acknowledgement: "He hath delivered my soul in peace, from

\* Psalm, lv. ver. 16, 17.

the battle that was against me.”\* In the true spirit of philanthropy, the Psalmist directs all his afflicted brethren to the same blessed and unfailing source of comfort ; “ Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee.” These words present us with the following subjects of reflection.

First, The nature, and cause of a believer’s burden.

Second, That line of conduct which every burdened saint should pursue : “ Cast thy burden upon the LORD.”

Third, The blessing which will result from this conduct. “ He will sustain thee.” O ALMIGHTY FATHER, thou giver of every good and perfect gift, enable us, we beseech thee, to meditate with profit upon these important subjects.

First, We are to contemplate the nature and cause of a believer’s burden.

Many are the afflictions of the righteous, and various are the causes from which they spring. For the most part, they are of a spiritual nature ; and are called a burden, because as an heavy weight they oppress the spirit. Sometimes a believer’s burden,

\* Psalm, lv. ver. 18.



his sorrow, and distress, proceed from a deep conviction of sin. Oppressed by the recollection of his sins, mourning in the sight of GOD, on account thereof, he will adopt that expressive language, "We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us, the burden of them is intolerable." The Psalmist was taught to contemplate sin in this light. He saith, "Innumerable evils have compassed me round about; mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of my head, therefore mine heart hath failed me."\* He who hath a proper sense of his own guilt and unworthiness, will experience the same thing. The heart of that sinner, who recollects that GOD will by no means clear the guilty, may well fail him. A sense of weakness and imperfection oft brings a weight of sorrow and care upon a believer's mind. He knows that his spiritual enemies are powerful, that he hath no might in himself to withstand this great host. Hence, fearfulness and trembling come upon him, and he concludes that he shall fall into their hands an easy prey. Perhaps he hath cried to GOD for assistance, and hath received no answer. Then in the bitterness of his soul he adopts the language of the sacred writer; "My GOD, my GOD, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of

\* Psalm, xl. ver. 12.

my roaring? O my GOD, I cry in the day time, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent.”\*

The christian is often burdened by the suggestions of unbelief. While this evil disposition prevails, there can be no comfort in the mind. It clouds the spirit, throws an awful gloom over the future prospects, and thus occasions great disquietude. It intimates, that there is no hope for the soul in his GOD. Yea, though this evil heart of unbelief in departing from the LORD, many are taken captive, and laid in darkness by the enemy. In these oppressive times we can say, “The enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground; he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead; therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me; and my heart within me is desolate.”†

The sorrow and care of a believer is sometimes occasioned by the hidings of the LORD’s reconciled countenance. It pleaseth GOD, in mercy, sometimes to deal thus with his people. He hides his face, and they are troubled. Yet they are thus taught that true life and happiness are only found in communion with their heavenly FATHER; they are excited unto self-examination with fervent

\* Psalm, xxii. ver. 1, 2.

† Ibid. cxliii. ver. 3, 4.

prayer. It cannot be pleasant, though it is sometimes needful, to walk in darkness. In such seasons, our enemies are most active; our apprehensions are excited, and sorrow filleth our hearts. We then adopt that affecting language, "How long wilt thou forget me, O LORD; for ever! How long wilt thou hide thy face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? How long shall my enemies be exalted over me?"\* These are, indeed, seasons of soul dejection; but they are also the necessary trials of our faith and patience.

The cares of this present life are sometimes the means of burdening the spirit. Men are prone to distress themselves with anxious thoughts respecting their worldly concerns. Our blessed LORD thus reproves all such anxiety. "I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly FATHER feedeth them. Are not ye much better than they? Which of you, by taking thought, can add one cubit unto his stature?" We are here taught from the providential goodness of GOD to the whole creation, to learn his watchful care over

\* Psalm, xiii. ver. 1, 2.



his people. Surely he who openeth his hand and filleth all things living with plenteousness, will not forget those whom "he hath purchased with his own blood;" and sanctified with his HOLY SPIRIT. "And why take ye thought for raiment! Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if GOD so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven; shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" Our unbelieving fears, respecting the present life, are here reproved by an appeal to the vegetable creation. We are directed to observe with how great beauty the LORD hath decked the fading flowers of the field; and thence to learn, that he will not leave his people destitute either of needful raiment for the body, or "the garments of salvation" for the soul. "Take, therefore, no thought, saying, what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek; for your heavenly FATHER knoweth that ye have need of all these things."\* We must <sup>not</sup> indulge inordinate care and anxiety respecting <sup>the</sup> temporal things; such a conduct is only suited for those who are unacquainted with more durable riches. Let, therefore, all such concerns be laid aside, and live in dependance upon GOD; with whom to

\* St. Matt. ch. vi. ver. 25 to 32.

know, and relieve the wants of his people is the same thing. In these various circumstances we discover the nature and cause of a believer's burden. The LORD give them grace patiently to endure, till *he* shall see good to give them rest.

Second, We are to consider that line of conduct which every burdened saint should pursue. "Cast thy burden upon the LORD."

St. Paul hath admirably explained this direction. He saith, "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto GOD."\* Every child of GOD is permitted to reveal his sorrows unto his heavenly FATHER, and to request from him all needful support and consolation. It hath pleased the LORD to instruct us how to pray. And we shall find that in his prayer we are taught to require every needful blessing for time and eternity. In his words, we may cast upon our GOD every burden with which we are oppressed. To be convinced of this, let us contemplate that excellent Compendium of the LORD's prayer with which the Catechism presents us. "I desire my LORD GOD our heavenly FATHER, who is the giver of all goodness, to send his grace unto me, and to all people; that we may worship him, serve him, and obey him as we

\* Philip. ch. iv. ver. 6.

ought to do." If the soul be oppressed with unbelief, these words may tend to remove it. We are not invoking aid from a stranger of a morose disposition, who hath neither ability nor inclination to relieve our distress. But we are calling upon "the LORD GOD our heavenly FATHER." We address the ALMIGHTY, the everlasting JEHOVAH. He who is our covenant, our reconciled GOD and FATHER in the LORD JESUS CHRIST; *he* bestoweth mercy upon his people; *he* hath a blessing to supply every want they can possibly experience. "*He* is the giver of all goodness." Saith the Apostle, "My GOD shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by CHRIST JESUS."\* When by faith we can contemplate GOD as our FRIEND and PARENT, how are we encouraged in prayer! We then "have access with boldness unto the throne of grace." If a sense of weakness and imperfection, a conviction that we cannot of ourselves serve GOD aright, be the burden of our soul, we are here instructed in what manner to "cast it upon the LORD." We are sent unto *him* for "grace that we may worship *him*, serve *him*, and obey *him* as we ought to do." Be not reluctant, O believer, to cast thy burden upon the LORD. If it arise from a sense of thine infirmity, say unto *him*, Be thou pleased, O GOD, to strengthen me by thy SPIRIT'S might in the inner man! We are also taught to say, "I pray unto GOD that he

\* Philip. ch. iv. ver. 19.



will send us all things that be needful, both for our souls and bodies; and that he will be merciful unto us, and forgive us our sins; and that it will please him to save and defend us in all dangers ghostly and bodily," that is from all accidents which may injure the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and distress the soul. Art thou, O Christian, oppressed with the cares of the present life. Cast thy burden upon the LORD in the words he hath taught thee. "Give us this day our daily bread." Feed me with convenient food, and nourish my soul with the words of thy grace unto eternal life. Is sin thy burden? Art thou oppressed with a sense of guilt. Adopt the same conduct: say unto thy FATHER, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." Pardon my sin, O LORD, and enable me from a sense of thy forgiving love to pardon all those who have offended me. May GOD give us grace so to act! Unto this we are taught to add our request, "that he will keep us from all sin and wickedness; and from our ghostly enemy, and from everlasting death." Art thou, O believer, troubled with a fear of falling into sin? Art thou distressed with the sense of approaching danger; and apprehensive lest thou shouldest be left as a prey unto Satan, who, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour? Cast thus thy burden upon the LORD. Use those expressive petitions, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil;" Suffer me not, O LORD, to "be tempted above what

I am able. But with the temptation also, make a way for my escape, that I may be able to bear it; and let it please thee to save me from an evil word, an evil heart, and that wicked one who seeketh my destruction. We may be encouraged thus to cast our burdens upon the LORD by the words with which this part of our Catechism concludes; "and this I trust he will do of his mercy and goodness through our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and therefore I say Amen, so be it." In CHRIST all the promises of GOD are yea, and Amen. And he hath said, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the FATHER, in my name he will give it you."\* A time of trouble should always be a time of prayer, both that we may obtain, "grace to help," while it shall last, and in the LORD'S due time complete deliverance therefrom. He who wishes to obtain speedy relief, must seek it by instant prayer unto that blessed GOD whose prerogative it is, to give rest unto the weary soul.

Third, We are to contemplate the blessing which will result from this conduct. "He shall sustain thee."

Our GOD hath never said to his praying people, "Seek ye my face in vain." His command to pray stands connected with a gracious promise that our prayers shall be heard. "He saith, call upon me in

\*St. John, ch. xvi. ver. 23.

the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.\* However great the afflictions of his people are, the LORD will sustain them; he will deliver them from the hand of their strongest enemy, and ere long place them in that heavenly kingdom where the voice of sorrow and crying is never heard. "There hath no temptation taken us, but such as is common to man." The trials and difficulties which we encounter, are not peculiar to ourselves. They have been the portion of believers in all ages of the church. "But GOD is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able." He knows the measure of grace and strength which his people have received, and it is said, "As thy day so shall thy strength be. He will with the temptation also, make a way to escape that ye may be able to bear it." The trials of the LORD's redeemed will have an end, but their joys are eternal. In the time of adversity we are disposed to think that GOD hath forgotten us; he reproves this thought in the following affectionate address. "Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, my way is hid from the LORD, and my judgment is not passed over from my GOD." What meaneth this language of unbelief and apprehension? What cause is there for such an assertion? "Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting GOD, the LORD, the CREATOR of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary? There is

\* Psalm l. ver. 15.



no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength." When his people, sensible of their own weakness, and fearful of their enemies, are ready to give up the contest as fruitless, he arms them with his strength, and giveth them the victory. "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall." They who confide in an arm of flesh will be disappointed; their very confidence will prove the source of their destruction. "But they that wait upon the LORD," those who in humble faith and patience "cast their burden upon him," shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.\* "He shall sustain thee." The LORD hath not promised that he will immediately deliver his praying people from their respective burdens; but he is engaged to support them in all their trials by the aid of his divine grace. In the season of adversity, we are fretful and impatient; yea, and sometimes we seek relief in such methods as are inconsistent with the divine will, and therefore can only tend to increase our sorrow. Surely if GOD be with us in the day of trouble, to sustain our sinking spirit, we can have no just cause to repine. We should rather say with the Prophet, "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall I shall arise, when I sit in darkness the LORD shall be a light unto

\* Isa. ch. xl. ver. 27 to 31.

me. I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him until he plead my cause and execute judgment for me.\* We have an instance of the LORD's sustaining mercy in the case of St. Paul, which he thus relates. "There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me." Many conjectures have been hazarded respecting the nature of the trial here referred to. But as the Scriptures are silent upon the subjects, such conjectures cannot tend to edification. "For this thing I besought the LORD thrice that it might depart from me." Did the Apostle experience an immediate deliverance? No; but he obtained an answer of mercy. For it is written, "And he said unto me, my grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." This answer satisfied the praying Apostle; it changed his mourning into joy. For he saith, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in mine infirmities, that the power of CHRIST may rest upon me."† Let this encourage every afflicted saint to call upon the name of the LORD for comfort and deliverance. He is an ALMIGHTY GOD, and therefore able to do more than we can ask or think. He is a gracious GOD, and therefore willing to assist his people; He is a faithful GOD, and therefore will accomplish his word to the uttermost. Oh! then

\* Micah. ch. vii. ver. 8, 9.      † 2 Cor. ch. xii. ver. 7, to 9.

- " Cast thy burdens on the LORD
- " Leave them with thy SAVIOUR ;
- " He whose hands for thee were bor'd
- " Can, and will deliver.
- " Why should sorrows bow thee down
- " Trials or temptations ?
- " Is not CHRIST upon the throne,
- " Still thy strong salvation ?"

Those who thus cast their burden upon the LORD, shall be supported, and comforted in every season of conflict, and finally obtain a complete deliverance from all their afflictions. The former every real Christian hath in some measure experienced ; for the latter he must patiently wait, till it shall please GOD to take him home to glory. All such may therefore adopt the language of an Apostle, " For this cause we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. While we look, not at the things which are seen ;" not upon outward circumstances or those objects which are presented to the carnal eye ; " but at the things which are not seen ;" those which are not perceived by an eye of sense ; " for the things which are seen are temporal ;" unsatisfactory in their nature, short and uncertain in their duration ; " but the things which are not seen are eternal."\* These alone possess true

\* 2 Cor. ch. iv. v. 16, 17, 18.



excellence : these alone are worthy the attention of an immortal spirit. May GOD impart unto our souls the faith which entereth thus within the vail ! May he enable us to cast our burden upon himself, and according to his gracious promise, sustain our souls in every time of need and affliction.





## LECTURE XIV.

LEVIT. chap. viii. ver. 14.

*Ye shall do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances,  
to walk therein, I am the LORD your GOD.*

THE most important of all knowledge is that, which directs mankind unto the way of life. Glory be to GOD, this information is communicated in the sacred writings. If men were more in the habit of consulting these, they could not so frequently involve themselves in error. Were they as willing to abide by their infallible decisions, as they are forward to profess faith in their divine origin, much evil would be left undone and much good performed, which is now wholly omitted. The text directs us unto that path wherein it is no less our privilege than our duty to walk; and the authority which enforceth the precept is such, as cannot with safety be opposed. “I am the LORD your GOD.” Surely *his* commands should be obeyed.

If we consider the injunction itself, we shall find that it doth not require any thing unreasonable or improper. “Ye shall do my judgments and keep



mine ordinances to walk therein." GOD, who is possessed of immaculate purity, and infinite goodness, cannot enjoin that which is in itself wrong, or in its tendency pernicious. *His* perfect holiness will not permit us to suppose the former; nor *his* boundless mercy the latter. We may indeed assert that the divine commandments are intimately connected with the welfare and happiness of man; yea, so much is this the case, that he will ever enjoy the greatest comfort whose heart, life, and conversation, are most conformable unto the laws of GOD. Hence such persons highly esteem that law; they can say with the Psalmist, "My soul longeth after thy commandments."

We pray GOD to send down his HOLY SPIRIT, and to write his laws in each of our hearts, so that they may be displayed in our conduct and deportment!

In the prosecution of our present Lecture, we propose to adopt the following method.

First, We shall enquire respecting those judgments and ordinances, the observance of which is required by the text.

Second, We will explain, what is intended by keeping them and walking therein.

Third, We shall contemplate the high authority

by which this obedience is commanded, "I am the LORD your GOD." May thy SPIRIT, O LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, enlighten our understanding, and enable us to speak, as the oracles of truth, upon these important subjects!

First, We are to enquire respecting those judgments and ordinances which the text commands us to observe. "Ye shall do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances."

We are not to apprehend that the expression "judgments" hath any reference unto those awful manifestations of the divine wrath, whereby sinners shall be consumed; or unto that righteous decision which will finally determine the future state of all mankind. In these respects, judgment is not our province. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the LORD." And our REDEEMER'S command is, "Judge not, that ye be not judged."\* It is most probable that the word "judgments" is to be explained by the term "ordinances," which likewise occurs in the text, and that these refer unto that ceremonial dispensation which GOD delivered unto the Jews by the hand of his servant Moses. This application of the word is not unusual in the sacred writings. The following scripture presents us with an instance of it. *He sheweth his word unto Jacob;*

\* St. Matt, ch. vii. ver. 1.

*his statutes, and his judgments* unto Israel. *He* hath not dealt so with any nation, and as for *his judgments*, they have not known them.\* The sacred writer here alludes to the divinely instituted religion of the Jews; and he justly represents it as a bright evidence of the LORD'S favour toward that people. Those nations are indeed blessed among whom the beneficial light of true religion is found. The expression which occurs in the text, "judgments" is applied in the same manner by the prophet Isaiah. He saith, "Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O LORD, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name and to the remembrance of thee.† These words refer to the people of GOD. They are here described as waiting for the gracious manifestation of the LORD'S reconciled countenance, "in the way of his judgments;" that is, in the use of every religious ordinance which he had been pleased to appoint. Those who would meet with GOD must thus wait for *him*; for he will only be found "in the way of his own appointment."

We must observe that the word *ordinances* hath in holy scripture the same signification. Saith the Apostle, "Verily, the first covenant had *ordinances of divine service*, and a worldly sanctuary;‡ And again, "Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings; and *carnal ordinances* imposed

\* Psalm, cxlvii. ver. 19, 20.

† Heb. ch. ix. ver. 1.

‡ Isaiah, ch. xxvi. ver. 8.



on them until the time of reformation."\* It will perhaps be said, that as the Levitical law, unto which the text refers, hath long since been repealed, the precept cannot be applicable unto those who live under a dispensation so different as is the gospel. We reply, that so far as the injunction contained in the text hath respect unto the ceremonial law, it is certainly annulled; but at the same time we must remark, that if the Christian church hath no concern in those declarations of the sacred volume which primarily refer unto the Jews, she is then deprived of a valuable and interesting, not to say a principal part of scripture. And we would add, that the Gospel, though it be a pure and spiritual dispensation, hath nevertheless its judgments and ordinances, which may properly be referred to GOD, because they are of his own appointment. We apprehend therefore, that the text may be considered as having a secondary reference unto these: and this sentiment is confirmed by the recollection, that the word, "judgment" is applied to denote the gospel itself. For it is written, "Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth, I have put my SPIRIT upon him; and he shall bring forth *judgment* unto the Gentiles.† And again, "A bruised reed shall he not breake, and smoking flax shall he not quench; he shall bring forth judgment unto truth.‡ In these scriptures, the word judgment must necessarily be considered as an allusion

\* Heb. ch. ix. ver. 10. † Isaiah, ch. xlii. ver. 1. ‡ Ibid, ver. 3.

to the gospel, which was introduced among men, by the lowly JESUS, the friend of sinners.

If you enquire respecting these “ judgments,” or as we generally call them *sacraments*, what, and how many they are? we may obtain adequate information in that part of the Catechism, which is to be the subject of our present Lecture. We learn thence, that there are “ two only as generally necessary to salvation; that is to say baptism, and the supper of the LORD.” We may confirm this declaration by an appeal unto *holy writ*. Saith our blessed LORD unto his disciples, “ All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth; go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world.\* Our blessed SAVIOUR here commands that we observe the sacrament of baptism, and prescribes the form of words in which it shall be administered. With regard to the LORD’S supper, I would introduce the declaration of St. Paul; “ For I have received of the LORD that which also I delivered unto you; that the LORD JESUS, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you; this do in remembrance

\* St. Matt. ch. xxviii. ver. 18, 19, 20.

of me. After the same manner also, he took the cup when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood ; this do, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye do eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the LORD's death till he come.\* Hence we learn, that the holy sacrament of the LORD's supper is an ordinance of divine institution ; and as such to be observed of his people, till he shall come again the second time without sin unto salvation. Some speak of more sacraments than these, but we cannot find them in the word of GOD, and therefore are unwilling to account them such. It appears then, from the scriptures we have introduced, that the two sacraments of baptism, and the supper of the LORD, are to be contemplated as " judgments and ordinances" of GOD. They were instituted by our LORD JESUS CHRIST who is " GOD over all, blessed for ever." For instruction respecting the nature and design of these sacraments, we shall refer you to the Catechism. We are thereby taught when questioned what we mean by the word sacrament, to reply ; " I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, given unto us, ordained by CHRIST himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof." This definition is so plain, that it cannot be misunderstood. In baptism, water is the sign and pledge of that inward purity imparted

\* 1 Cor. ch. xi. ver. 23 to 26.



unto the soul, by the sanctifying influences of God the HOLY SPIRIT. It is written, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh; and I will put my spirit within you.\* In the holy sacrament of the LORD's supper, bread and wine are the emblems of our REDEEMER's body and blood. Speaking of the former, he saith, "This is my body which is given for you;" of the latter, "This is my blood of the new Testament which is shed for you, and for many for the remission of sins." We are taught in our Catechism, that "there are two parts in a sacrament, the outward and visible sign, and the inward and spiritual grace." The former an expressive emblem of the latter; yea, and when duly received in the spirit of faith, with an humble dependance upon God through CHRIST, it proves both "the means whereby we receive the same and a pledge to assure us thereof." For in this case, so surely as we receive the one, we shall also be partakers of the other.

It is proper to observe, that the expressions in the text, "Judgments and ordinances, may be considered as referring unto every precept in the sacred volume which respects our duty either to God or

\* Ezek. ch. xxxvi. ver. 25, 26, 27.

man. They teach us how we should conduct ourselves in the ways of truth and holiness. We are commanded to obey them by that mighty God who will not clear the guilty. Such are the judgments and ordinances of our most holy faith." May God write them in every heart!

Second, We are to explain what is intended by "Keeping them, and walking therein."

These expressions denote that uniform and constant obedience to the will of God which should be displayed in the conduct and dispositions of all men; but most especially of those who are called Christians. They may be truly said to keep these judgments and ordinances, who, after the example of Mary, "lay them up in their hearts."\* Such will of necessity walk therein; for "out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh." This conduct is required of men, as an evidence that their hearts are sanctified by the faith of the gospel. It is written, "Hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected; hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk even as he

\* St. Luke, ch. ii. ver. 19.

walked.”\* Whoever assumes the profession of the christian faith, is thereby engaged to imitate the conduct of its great AUTHOR and FINISHER, the LORD JESUS CHRIST. It is his duty to keep the judgments, and walk in the ordinances thereof. They must be in his heart to regulate all its affections; they must be displayed in his conduct to the glory of GOD. We have often observed with deep concern, how much the ordinances of our most holy faith are neglected. Many parents are tardy in devoting their children to the SAVIOUR by the sacrament of baptism. There are, likewise, numbers of professing christians who as yet, have never commemorated a REDEEMER’S dying love in the way of his appointment. This neglect is an awful sign of the times wherein we live. It exhibits a melancholy proof that “iniquity doth abound; that the love of many hath waxed cold.” The excuse generally alledged to palliate this omission, is, we are not sufficiently prepared to communicate.” Let such remember, that if they are not prepared to meet GOD in the ordinances which he hath appointed, they cannot be ready to meet *him* in death and judgment. Surely in this state they should not be content to live even a single moment. But we forbear. As we are convinced that this ordinance was designed for believers only, so we could wish that no others should be partakers thereof. Let them approach the holy table,

\* 1 John, ch. ii. ver. 3 to 6.



and they shall find “ their souls strengthened and refreshed, by the body and blood of CHRIST, as their bodies are by the bread and wine.” If we consider the judgments and ordinances here spoke of as including the whole will of GOD, he may be said to keep them and walk therein, in whose heart they are written by the SPIRIT of the LORD; in whose conduct they are displayed to the praise and glory of the divine grace. This is the situation of every real christian. He can say, “ I delight in the law of GOD after the inward man.” And he “ shews the work of the law written in his heart,” by a life of holiness. He keeps the judgments of the LORD. He can adopt the language of the Psalmist; “ How amiable are thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts. My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living GOD.”\* He walks in the divine ordinances, frequents the LORD’s holy temple, and his conduct accords well with the professions of obedience he there makes. I pray GOD that we may be such.

Third, We are to contemplate the high authority by which our obedience unto these “ judgments and ordinances” is required. “ I am the LORD your GOD.”

The ordinances of our most holy faith are not a mere state trick. They are no invention of crafty

\* Psalm, lxxxiv. ver. 1, 2.

priests, to enslave the people either by the gloomy terrors, or visionary enjoyments of superstition. We acknowledge, indeed, that men have sadly perverted them; but we must also observe, that the abuse of that which is in itself good and excellent, affords no argument against the legitimate use thereof. These are ordinances of the LORD; he claims them as his own, and commands that we keep them. Ye shall do *my judgments*, and keep *mine ordinances*, to walk therein." "He, therefore, that despiseth, despiseth not man, but GOD."

"I am the LORD your GOD." How endearing is this method of enforcing duty! The regenerate will be sensible of its constraining power. I am your GOD. Your reconciled FATHER in the LORD JESUS CHRIST; your constant friend, by whose mighty hand and outstretched arm, you were rescued from "the bondage of corruption, and brought into the glorious liberty of the children of GOD." I am possessed of infinite wisdom; my love for you "surpasseth all understanding." I require you to observe these institutions as an evidence of your gratitude, because I know that it will tend to your present and everlasting comfort. "These are ways of pleasantness, and all these paths are peace." When we can thus behold GOD as our reconciled FATHER, as our DELIVERER and constant FRIEND, our hearts are filled with love towards him, and we hasten to fulfil *his* royal pleasure; we are disposed to renounce

all, that we may serve *him*. Is it then GOD our heavenly FATHER who saith “Ye shall do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances?” Doth he condescend to require this as an evidence of our gratitude to him, for his unspeakable mercies? Believer here is a motive to excite thy constant obedience! Dishonour not thy GOD, nor injure thine own soul by a neglect of the divine ordinances. Seek the manifestations of thy parent’s love in the way of his own appointment. Seek *him* in thy private devotions: seek *him* in the worshipping assemblies of his saints, and approach with humility unto the table of thy LORD. Remember, for thine encouragement, that he hath promised to “meet his people, and to make them joyful in his house of prayer.”

Sinners, ye have long neglected the judgments and ordinances of GOD; we apprize you of your danger. He cometh to take vengeance on them who know not the LORD, and obey not the gospel. Fly, therefore, from the wrath to come. Is your enquiry, Whither shall we fly? Where can we find a refuge? We reply, Come to JESUS CHRIST; “He is an hiding place and a refuge; a covert from the storm and tempest, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.” Come unto him, and you shall be saved. May GOD ALMIGHTY dispose you to accept this invitation, and bring you to JESUS, that you may have everlasting life, for his great name’s sake. Amen!





## LECTURE XV.

ST. MARK, chap. xvi. ver. 16.

*He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but  
he that believeth not, shall be damned.*

WE are here presented with part of the last conversation which took place between our blessed LORD and his disciples, previous to his glorious ascent into heaven. The information which these words convey, is of infinite importance. It directs us to those means, in the use whereof salvation is to be obtained, and assures us that those who neglect them shall perish for ever. The words of GOD are faithful and true. "Heaven and earth shall pass away; but not one jot or tittle shall pass from them till all be fulfilled." "He, therefore, that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved." He who by divine grace is enabled to receive JESUS CHRIST, whose confidence is reposed in *him* alone; who hath recourse to the divine ordinances, and is obedient unto the commands of the LORD, "shall be saved;" he shall be brought into a state of reconciliation and favor with GOD here on earth; and he shall be admitted into a state of perpetual enjoyment in hea-

ven. "But he that believeth not;" he who thinketh scorn of that kind message which the gospel brings; who gives no credence unto those words of "grace and truth," "shall be damned." He shall be cut off from among the righteous; he shall not enter into the land of the living. These words of the text resemble the pillar of cloud and fire, which accompanied the Israelites in their journey through the wilderness. "It gave light unto the children of Israel; but it was a cloud of darkness unto the Egyptians." So the scripture before us, giveth light unto the believer in JESUS by the assurance of eternal life, but to the ungodly it is a cloud and darkness; it predicts their final destruction. "O, my soul, come not thou into the secret of sinners; unto their assembly mine honour be not thou united," lest with them thou shouldest incur the sentence of condemnation! In the prosecution of our Lecture we shall contemplate the subject before us in the following method.

First, We shall explain the nature of that salvation which the text mentions.

Second, We shall consider the means for the attainment thereof, which are here described; "He that believeth, and is baptized."

Third, We will exhibit the fatal consequences of unbelief, "He that believeth not shall be damned."



May the GOD of all grace and consolation be pleased to open our understanding that we may know the scriptures ; and our hearts that we may receive the truth in the knowledge and love thereof !

First, We are to explain the nature of salvation mentioned in the text. “ He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.”

Our blessed LORD gave his disciples commandment to “ go into all the world, and preach the gospel unto every creature.” And to animate them in this arduous engagement, he assured them that success should attend their exertions in this cause ; for he saith, “ He that believeth, and is baptized shall be saved.” Whosoever shall receive your message, whosoever believes the gospel you are commissioned to preach, shall be saved ; he shall experience that salvation which the gospel reveals unto guilty men. The salvation which the gospel reveals, is of a spiritual nature. It includes these rich blessings : First, a deliverance from the guilt and punishment of sin. Saith the Apostle, “ There is, therefore now no condemnation to them that are in CHRIST JESUS, who walk not after the flesh, but after the SPIRIT.”\* And again, “ CHRIST hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us ; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hang-

\* Rom. ch. viii. ver. 1.

eth on a tree."\* The wages of sin is death. We have all sinned, and are therefore exposed to this condemnation. But CHRIST hath died for sinners. *Him* hath GOD set forth to be a propitiation for sins; and whosoever believeth on *him*, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation.

Second, The salvation of the gospel includes a deliverance from the love and power of sin. Our LORD JESUS CHRIST doth not leave those whom he hath redeemed from death by his most precious blood in the service of Satan. He delivers them from this cruel enemy, and brings them into that service of GOD which is perfect freedom. Their hearts are sanctified through faith which is in *him*. They have therefore an utter aversion to sin; and they flee from it, as from the face of a serpent. The Apostle saith unto such, "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law but under grace.† Every true believer is "dead unto sin, but alive unto GOD, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD."

Third, The salvation revealed by the gospel includes a present experience of reconciliation and favour with GOD through the REDEEMER. By nature mankind are in a state of enmity against GOD. They desire not the knowledge of his ways; nor will they walk in his paths; but each following the devices

\* Gal. ch. iii. ver. 13.      † Rom. ch. vi. ver. 14.

of his own wicked heart, wanders far from GOD, the only source of true happiness. A believer in CHRIST is recalled from his wanderings, his backslidings are healed, and he is introduced to the enjoyment of the divine favour. Saith the Apostle unto such characters; ye who sometimes were far off are now made nigh by the blood of CHRIST.\* The prodigal is brought home to his father's house and received with mercy through a REDEEMER'S all sufficient merit. He is reconciled to his once offended parent. For it is written, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with GOD through our LORD JESUS CHRIST, by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of GOD."† And again, because ye are sons, GOD hath sent forth the SPIRIT of his SON into your hearts, crying ABBA, FATHER.‡ The believer hath a present experience of gospel blessings. He hath access with boldness to the mercy seat; he knows that all things shall work together for his good, and he rejoiceth before the LORD.

Fourth, The salvation we are considering includes deliverance from every foe. The enemies of a believer are numerous and powerful. Their object is no less <sup>as</sup> ~~then~~ the destruction of his soul. They are active, diligent and artful. They embrace every op-

\* Ephes. ch. ii, ver. 13.    † Rom. ch. v. ver. 1, 2.

‡ Gal. ch. iv. ver. 6.



portunity of preventing his progress in the ways of GOD, and have recourse to every persuasive art that they may seduce him from the paths of duty. Yet the saint is not intimidated. He goes forth in the strength of the LORD, having taking to himself the whole armour of GOD. He opposes them with vigour and constancy, being strong in the LORD, and in the power of his might. He shall finally prevail against them; and in heaven adopt that song of triumph, "Thanks be to GOD who giveth us the victory through our LORD JESUS CHRIST."

The salvation named in the text, refers also to that state of glory and the blessedness which is prepared for the people of GOD. Saith the Apostle, "There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the LORD, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.\* This salvation is free. "The gift of GOD is eternal life through JESUS CHRIST our LORD." It is perfect. The REDEEMER saith, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. Let men beware how they presume to add thereunto. It is "not of works, lest any man should boast." Far therefore be it from us to introduce any of our sin defiled services as coadjutors to the REDEEMER'S finished work. May God freely impart his salvation unto our souls!

\* 2 Tim. ch. iv. ver. 8.

Second, We are to consider the means for the attainment of salvation as they are described in the text. "He that believeth, and is baptized."

Faith is here introduced as a means of salvation. We cannot suppose that faith intends no more than a speculative assent unto the doctrines of the gospel. This may be given without any heart knowledge of salvation. Faith is a saving grace wrought in the soul by the SPIRIT OF GOD. The sinner is hereby enabled to receive JESUS as his PROPHET, PRIEST and KING. This grace is to the soul, what the hand is to the body, it receives the good promises of GOD, as they are revealed in holy scripture, for the comfort of the believer. It cannot be procured by mere human exertion; for it is the gift of GOD, a means whereby salvation is made known in the heart. Saith the Apostle, "by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of GOD."\* There are means appointed in the use whereof this grace is to be obtained. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of GOD." Do you desire to possess this inestimable blessing? Seek it then in the use of these means, with an humble dependance upon GOD, and you will no doubt be made partakers thereof. Baptism is also mentioned in the text as a means of salvation. This is a sacrament, the observance whereof is ordained by the

\* Ephes. ch. ii. ver. 8.

LORD JESUS. It consisteth of two parts, “the outward and visible sign, and the inward and spiritual grace.” Whenever these are faithfully received, baptism is found the means of salvation. Saith the Apostle, “The like figure whereunto, even baptism doth also now save us; (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards GOD) by the resurrection of JESUS CHRIST.”\* Our Catechism thus defines the outward and visible sign of this sacrament. “Water wherein the person is baptized in the name of the FATHER and of the SON and of the HOLY GHOST.” The scripture from which this definition is extracted, is so well known, that we need not here repeat it. The inward and spiritual grace of baptism our church asserts to be, “a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness.” The following scripture language will justify what is here advanced. “Know ye not that so many of us, as were baptized into JESUS CHRIST, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as CHRIST was raised from the dead by the glory of the FATHER, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.

\* 1 Pet. ch. iii. ver. 21.



Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive unto GOD, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.\* These words evidently refer to the sacrament of baptism, which they describe as a death unto sin, being buried with CHRIST, and a new birth unto righteousness; a resurrection with our SAVIOUR to a life of obedience, which is by *him*, to the praise and glory of GOD. I would that all who are baptized were partakers of this grace. We must not forget the language which is connected with this definition of baptism. "For being by nature born in sin, and children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace." By nature "born in sin, and children of wrath." How humiliating is this assertion! Can it be consistent with holy scripture? It is, for it is written, "What is man, that he should be clean? And he which is born of a woman that he should be righteous? Behold he putteth no trust in his saints, yea the heavens are not clean in his sight: how much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water."† The Psalmist also saith, "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.‡ All men may adopt the same confession, for they are the corrupted offspring of fallen parents. "And who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" Not one. Our Catechism also asserts that we are "children of wrath." The divine indignation abideth

\* Rom. ch. vi. v. 3 to 7 and 11. † Job, ch. xv. ver. 14 to 16.

‡ Psalm, li. ver. 5.

upon every transgressor ; so that every servant of sin is a “child of wrath.” Saith St. Paul, addressing the Ephesian converts, “You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein, in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past, in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind, and *were by nature the children of wrath even as others.\** How awful is the natural condition of men ! They are heirs of destruction. Yet there is hope for them. They may obtain deliverance from their guilt and misery ; they may receive an “inheritance among them that are sanctified through faith, which is in CHRIST JESUS.” The Catechism alludes to this fact in the following assertion ; “We are hereby made the children of grace.” Unto what do these words refer ? To the sacrament of baptism. Not merely, as some would insinuate, to the sprinkling with, or immersion in water. This is no more than the outward visible sign ; the reference here is unto the inward and spiritual grace, described as “a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness.” Whoever receives this, is, without doubt, “thereby made a child of grace.” He is born of water, and of the HOLY SPIRIT, and being thus regenerated he shall obtain

\* Ephes. ch. ii. ver. 1 to 3.

everlasting life. We are convinced that the sign may be received, without any experience of the thing thereby signified. We sincerely lament that so many circumstances should occur, which tend to the confirmation of this sentiment. For we observe that many who are baptized, "neither die unto sin, nor rise again unto righteousness." Yet every one who is really baptized with the HOLY GHOST, according to the REDEEMER'S promise, receives the thing signified, his "heart is purified from an evil conscience;" he is a child of GOD, an heir of glory. The LORD grant for his mercy's sake, that we may be such!

Third, We are to exhibit the fatal consequences of unbelief. "He that believeth not shall be damned."

These are terrific words. They assert that the consequences of unbelief are a final exclusion from the kingdom of heaven, and eternal weight of punishment which is to be endured in those doleful abodes, "where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched, but the smoke of their torments ascendeth continually." Unbelief in this passage, signifies a rejection of that testimony concerning CHRIST and his gospel, which the Apostles were commissioned to give unto all the world. Whoever rejects this counsel of GOD either wholly or in part, doth thereby expose himself to misery and ruin. For as "Israel of



old could not enter into rest, because of unbelief," so these, by the same evil, are excluded from the enjoyment of gospel privileges here, and the possession of glory hereafter. We have lately been taught, that religious opinions have no effect in the accomplishment of salvation, but let our faith be what it may, if our lives are good, there is no doubt of our future happiness. Those who adhere to the written word of God will adopt a different opinion. They know that religious sentiments are of the greatest importance, for they are assured that he, who living under the light of the gospel, doth not in heart believe the whole record contained therein, "shall, without doubt, everlastingly perish." Some will perhaps think that this is an hard saying; they will probably assert that it is uncharitable thus to condemn all whose sentiments in religion do not coincide with our own. I shall reply to such, it is a scriptural assertion; for it is written, "The fearful, *and unbelieving*, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their portion in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.\* And I would add, that they are condemned, not because they differ from us in their views of religion, but because they will not assent unto those pure and wholesome words of life which are contained in holy scripture. We admonish all Arians and Socinians, who "deny the

\* Revel. ch. xxi. ver. 8.

LORD that bought them," all Deists, and Atheists, yea the whole host of infidels, that the path in which they walk leadeth unto death, their steps also incline unto hell. An unbeliever incurs present condemnation. For it is written, "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten SON of GOD. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.\* Such an one will also experience final misery. "He that believeth not shall be damned." He will be "cast into outer darkness, where is weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth." Hearest thou, O proud despiser of GOD's truth, this awful assertion? Thine unbelief enables thee now to condemn the menaces of holy writ. Thou canst not apprehend that "GOD, who is love," will inflict eternal punishment upon any man; but thou dost not consider, that his justice requires the condemnation of each offender; that he will exact such a penalty as shall be adequate unto the purity of *his* violated law; and that his faithfulness engages *him* to accomplish whatever he hath said. Oh what sentiments will thou entertain, should the curse denounced by the text, fall upon thy devoted head! Thou wilt then believe, and through the extremity of thy torments blaspheme the GOD of heaven." If thou shouldst die impenitent, and unbelieving, such will be thy portion.

Accept the admonition which is given. Be not disgusted with its plainness, and apparent severity. Lose not thy precious time in vain and infidel cavils against the truth, but while thou hast the opportunity, make haste to escape from impending destruction. Hark! Dost thou not hear the distant sound of the avenging thunderbolt? Oh, be very quick; fly for thy life unto the LORD JESUS CHRIST, the AUTHOR and GIVER of eternal life. He can subdue thy proud heart, and enable thee to believe unto the salvation of thy soul. Call therefore upon *him*, for the pardon of thy sins; for the renewal of thy nature, and for that lively faith which is wrought in the heart by the operation of his DIVINE SPIRIT. Then wilt thou experience “a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness, whereby thou, who art by nature a child of wrath, shalt be made a child of grace, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.”





## LECTURE XVI.

ACTS, ch. ii. part of ver. 38.

*Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of JESUS CHRIST, for the remission of sins.*

THESE words are found in the conclusion of a most excellent and faithful sermon, preached by St. Peter, on the day of Pentecost, immediately after the miraculous descent of the HOLY SPIRIT upon the blessed Apostles. Upon this remarkable occasion, men of corrupt minds, enemies to the truth, endeavoured to misrepresent the cause of a fact which, though they beheld, they could not understand. Some of the spectators, overwhelmed in astonishment, were saying to one another, "What meaneth this? But others mocking, said, these men are full of new wine." Immediately St. Peter, with all the affectionate meekness of heaven-taught wisdom, defended himself and his fellow disciples. He vindicated them from the foul charge of drunkenness, and declares that in the circumstance before them, the Jews might behold the accomplishment of a well known prophecy ; he saith, " This is that which was spoken by the propher Joel ; and it

shall come to pass in the last days, saith GOD, I will pour out of my SPIRIT upon all flesh, and your sons, and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. And on my servants, and on my hand-maidens I will pour out in those days of my SPIRIT and they shall prophesy." The Apostle likewise nobly asserts the honour and dignity of that JESUS, whom they had crucified, and assures them that the wonders they beheld were wrought by the effectual working of his mighty power. "When they heard these things, they were pricked in their hearts." Compunction and remorse seized upon them. They perceived at once the malignity of their crimes, and trembling under the apprehension of merited punishment, they say unto Peter, and the rest of the Apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of JESUS CHRIST for the remission of sins." These words present us with the following subjects of reflection.

First, The nature of the duty herein required. "Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of JESUS CHRIST."

Second, The benefit which will be derived from the right performance thereof, and which is to be sought therein, "the remission of sins."

We pray GOD to assist and bless us while we meditate upon these things.

First, We are to enquire respecting the nature of the duty which the text enjoins, "Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of JESUS CHRIST."

Here are two things mentioned which we shall consider as they occur, repentance, and baptism in the name of JESUS CHRIST. Repentance which we are first to consider, is a grace wrought in the soul by the SPIRIT of GOD. It includes an heartfelt sorrow for sin, a sincere abhorrence of iniquity and a firm resolution, by the help of GOD, to avoid it. We find in holy writ the following beautiful and comprehensive description of this grace. "Godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of, but the sorrow of the world worketh death." The sacred writer here distinguishes between genuine and false repentance. The former he speaks of as "Godly sorrow," that is such a contrition in the heart, on account of sin, as proceeds from the influence of divine grace, whereby the man is preserved from the horrors of absolute despair. This worketh repentance unto salvation. It is under GOD the means of effecting a total change in the heart. This needeth not to be repented of. The latter he describes as "the sorrow of the world;" a distressful apprehension of the mind produced by worldly motives and con-



siderations. This "worketh death." Hence we frequently observe that those who have acted unworthily have recourse to suicide that they may escape the disgraceful consequences of their misconduct. But this is a desperate and fallacious remedy. Those who adopt it exchange a temporal reproach for eternal shame and misery. We have in the case of David an admirable instance of genuine penitence. His deep and unfeigned contrition cannot be forgotten so long as the memory of the fifty-first psalm shall be retained. We have an awful display of the other in the person of Judas, who when he saw what was done repented himself, and brought the thirty pieces of silver, the price of his treachery, and cast them down before the high priest, saying, "I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood." And he departed, and went and hanged himself. So true it is that the sorrow of the world worketh death. But the fruits of evangelical contrition are very different. Saith the Apostle, "Behold this self same thing that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea what clearing of yourselves, yea what indignation, yea what fear, yea what vehement desire, yea what zeal, yea what revenge in all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear of this matter."\* Let it be observed, that men do not thus repent of their own accord, or by their own power. Such a godly sorrow is the gift of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. It rather proceeds from love to God, than

\* 2 Cor. ch. vii. ver. 10, 11.

the fear of punishment. It is always attended by such hope of the divine mercy through the REDEEMER, as supports the mind under all its affliction, and gives the prospect of complete remission. That man upon whom this grace hath been conferred, will be known by the rectitude of his deportment. For a true penitent cannot abide in sin. We read, that when John saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance; and think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father. For I say unto you, that GOD is able, of these stones, to raise up children unto Abraham. And now, also, the axe is laid unto the root of the trees; therefore every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire."\* Without repentance, there is no admission to the kingdom of heaven. It is proposed to sinners, and as we are by nature included in that description, we certainly should consider the call thereunto as addressed to ourselves.

The next object to be contemplated in the text, is "baptism." This was defined in a former Lecture as a sacrament, the observing whereof is required by CHRIST, and consisting of two parts; "the outward and visible sign, and the inward spiritual

\* St. Matt. ch. iii. ver. 7 to 10.

grace.\* From the connection between repentance and baptism, which we observe in the text, it hath been asserted, that the former is a preparatory qualification for the latter. Our Catechism inculcates this doctrine in the answer there given to the subsequent question, "What is required of persons to be baptized?" The reply is, "Repentance whereby they forsake sin, and faith whereby they stedfastly believe all the promises of God made to them in that sacrament." Such qualifications are certainly requisite, in order to a proper reception of baptism. An impenitent person, or an unbeliever, hath no right to partake thereof. To administer it unto such, is a profanation of the ordinance. It is evident that a similar requisition was made by St. Philip, ere he baptized the eunuch. At the divine command, this apostle joined himself unto a chariot, wherein was sitting an eunuch of great authority, under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. This man was reading that remarkable passage of the prophet Esaias, "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearers, so opened he not his mouth. In his humiliation his judgment was taken away, and who shall declare his generation; for his life is taken from the earth." And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, "I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this, of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture,

\* See Lecture XV.



and preached unto him JESUS. And as they went on their way they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch said, See here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest; and he answered and said, I believe that JESUS CHRIST is the SON of GOD. Upon this confession of his faith in CHRIST, Philip baptized him; and as they were coming up out of the water, the SPIRIT of the LORD caught away Philip that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing.\* As faith and repentance are said in the holy scriptures to be essential unto the worthy reception of baptism, some persons have taken occasion to argue against the administration of that sacrament to infants, who are incapable of these graces. Our church hath anticipated this objection, which she obviates in the following manner: "Because they promise them both by their sureties, which promise, when they come to age, themselves are bound to perform." The sponsors for those who come to be baptized, are not required to confer upon the child whom they represent, the graces of repentance and faith; neither do they engage that in its riper years these shall be found in the heart. They promise "to see that the child be virtuously brought up, to lead a godly and christian life, remembering always that baptism doth represent unto us our profession, which is to follow

\* Acts, ch. viii. ver. 27 to 37.

the example of our SAVIOUR CHRIST, and to be made like unto *him*, that as he died and rose again for us, so should we who are baptized die from sin, and rise again to righteousness; continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections, and daily proceeding in all virtue, and godliness of living.\* Would to GOD that those who surround the font in the character of sponsors, were duly sensible of the importance and serious nature of that engagement they voluntarily undertake! We remind them that these are vows unto the LORD; and therefore should not be made, except by those who are stedfastly determined, that by his grace, they will perform them. We are grieved to observe, that this solemn engagement is generally considered as a mere matter of form; and as such, entered upon with the utmost indifference. Those who have so acted, will one day find cause to change their opinion.

The practice of infant baptism may be justified by the conduct and command of our blessed LORD. It is written, "They brought young children to CHRIST that he should touch them, and his disciples rebuked those that brought them; but when JESUS saw it he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of GOD. Verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever shall not

\* See the Office for Baptism.

receive the kingdom of GOD as a little child, he shall not enter therein." This language will admit of the following construction. Oppose not the presentation of children unto me, but rather encourage those unto whose care they are committed, to present their tender charge before me, in the way I have appointed; and the rather, because the kingdom of GOD is composed of such as resemble children in their humility, their docile spirit, and their innocence. "Take heed, therefore, that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven, there angels do always behold the face of my FATHER which is in heaven." And you may be assured, that unless ye are converted, and become as little children, ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven. "And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them."\* Didst thou, HOLY JESUS, graciously receive and bless these little ones? And shall those who profess to be thy disciples reject them? GOD forbid! May they imitate thy conduct, may they be conformed unto thy will!

We apprehend, that infant baptism may also be justified from the practice of the Jewish church, into which children at the tender age of eight days were admitted by the right of circumcision, which seems to have corresponded with our sacrament of baptism. If in the one case children might be admitted, so we

\* St. Mark, ch. x. ver. 13 to 16.



apprehend they may and ought in the other. For whatever objections are urged against this practice, may also be applied unto infant circumcision. And if it be not admissible, the case of believing parents under the gospel is worse than it formerly was under the Levitical law. But this cannot be allowed, for it leads to an inference that the privileges enjoyed under a dispensation of types and shadows, were more extensive than those permitted under the gospel, which is the very substance and end of that system. To those who affirm that the scripture doth not countenance the practice, we shall reply, that the declaration of our blessed LORD seems, not only to countenance, but even to require the baptism of infants; inasmuch as that appears to be the only method in which believers can be said to bring or devote their children unto CHRIST; and we are convinced that no part of holy writ will justify the neglect thereof. It hath been said, we do not read in scripture that any infants were baptized. It is surely equal argument to say, neither do we read that any such were refused baptism. It seems probable, that as many whole families, households, were admitted to this sacrament, that some infants were at the same time made partakers thereof. Upon all these subjects, as we claim a right to think for ourselves, so we allow the same privilege unto others. We have stated what we believe to be the scripture account of this ordinance, and no more than what duty required.

Second, We are to contemplate the benefit which will result from a due performance of this duty, and which is to be sought therein. “ The remission of sins.”

How consolatory is the thought of a free and complete pardon unto that man, whose “ sins have taken such hold upon him that he is not able to look up.” The penitent is assured that he shall receive this blessing by the word of “ GOD, who cannot lie.” It is written, “ In those days, and at that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found, for I will pardon them whom I reserve.”\* What a noble promise. It asserts, that GOD will so completely remit the sins of his contrite children, that when sought for, there shall not a single crime be found. How true is that declaration of the Apostle, “ There is, therefore, now, no condemnation to them that are in CHRIST JESUS.” We are commanded to make known this forgiveness of sins unto every true penitent. It is written, “ Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the LORD’S hand double for all her sins.”† And the Apostles were commissioned to preach “ repentance and remission

\* Jer. ch. l. ver. 20.

† Isaiah, ch. xl. ver. 2.

of sins unto all nations, in the name of JESUS CHRIST, beginning at Jerusalem." Upon these and many similar declarations of the sacred volume, our hope of pardon is established. Blessed be GOD, "it is an hope which maketh not ashamed." This divine expectation of pardon doth not encourage either licentiousness or presumption. We may here introduce the Apostle's argument. "What shall we say then? (That is, with respect to the pardoning mercy of GOD) shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? GOD forbid! How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"\* This cannot occur; for "whosoever hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as he is pure." He, who from proper motives is desirous that his iniquities should be pardoned, will experience in his heart the most fervent desire to be rescued from the love and power of sin. He will abhor every sentiment which hath the least tendency to turn the "grace of GOD into licentiousness." He will seek the blessing with a contrite spirit in the use of the appointed means. Would to GOD that all were such. But ah, how many are found, who desire pardon, that they may sin with impunity? Such, however, cannot be gratified; for pardon and sanctification are inseparable. This blessing, "the remission of sins," is much in their view to whom "GOD hath granted repentance unto life." The hope thereof sustaineth their hearts, under their sorrow for sin. They are

\* Rom, ch. vi. ver. 1, 2.



anxious for the attainment thereof, that they may enjoy peace with GOD; that they may know him as their reconciled FATHER in the LORD JESUS CHRIST. The accomplishment of these desires will be obtained in the use of repentance, as the appointed means, but not as the procuring cause. The pardon of sins was purchased for his people, by "the precious blood of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, who as a lamb without blemish, and without spot, offered himself through the ETERNAL SPIRIT to GOD." It "was shed for many for *the remission of sins*." In CHRIST, "we have redemption, through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."

"Blood hath a voice to pierce the skies,  
Revenge, the blood of Abel cries;  
But the dear stream, when CHRIST was slain,  
Spake peace, as loud from ev'ry vein."

Blessed be his name, who voluntarily offered up himself as a sacrifice for sin, even JESUS, the great "AUTHOR and FINISHER of our most holy faith!"

The duty of repentance, to the performance of which the text exhorts us, no less than the blessing of pardon which it promiseth, implies that we are sinners. The sinner is an enemy of GOD; the divine wrath now abideth on him, and if he departs this life impenitent, everlasting misery will be

his portion. A method of escape from this danger is made known. Pardon is promised in the dear name of IMMANUEL; and the means in the use whereof it is to be sought, are also revealed. If we desire to obtain the blessing, we must have recourse to the means. “Repent, therefore, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of JESUS CHRIST, for the remission of sins.” Intreat of GOD the grace of true repentance; seek not merely baptism by water, for were you thus baptized a thousand times, your guilt would still remain. Rest not, therefore, in the outward and visible sign; but endeavour to obtain “the inward and spiritual grace; a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness;” the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the HOLY SPIRIT. Thus shall your heart be purified from an evil conscience; in these appointed means, you shall obtain the remission of sins, with sanctification here, as the pledge of eternal glory hereafter. For *he* is faithful that promised. May GOD enable us to seek *him* while *he* may be found. May he grant us the forgiveness of our sins; and an inheritance among them that are sanctified through faith which is in CHRIST JESUS!



## LECTURE XVII.

---

1 CORINTHIANS, ch. xi. ver. 26.

*For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup,  
ye do shew the LORD's death till he come.*

ST. Paul found it necessary to reprove the professors of religion at Corinth, for a crime which hath too great prevalence among ourselves, the prophanation of the LORD's supper, by receiving it in an unworthy manner. He saith, "When ye come together therefore, into one place, this is not to eat the LORD's supper. For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper; and one is hungry, and another is drunken." It is not probable that a tumultuous assemblage of men will celebrate with due solemnity, this holy sacrament; nor is that conduct to be tolerated at the table of GOD, which would be thought highly indecorous at the table of an earthly friend; where such confusion prevails, whatever the profession may be, this is not to eat the LORD's supper; there cannot be a due celebration of that most solemn ordinance; nay, those who so conduct themselves, receive to their own condemna-



tion, the sign and seal of so great a thing. “What? Have ye not houses to eat and drink in? Or despise ye the church of GOD, and shame them that have not?” These words contain a spirited reproof of such abominable licentiousness; they teach that the church of GOD was never designed to be a place of rioting and drunkenness; no, nor even an house of refreshment for the body; and therefore, that such an horrible prostitution of the divine ordinances therein dispensed, was the more criminal. We do not judge that a peculiar sanctity is to be attributed unto any edifice; but we apprehend that every place set apart for the divine worship, is so far to be accounted sacred, as to preclude all impropriety of deportment, and ensure it a degree of respect beyond what we pay to our own habitations; we are neither to eat, drink, nor sleep therein. Indeed we are taught that “Holiness becometh the house of the LORD for ever.” “What shall I say unto you? Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.” That is, your conduct is highly indecorous. It is a reproach to yourselves; and a scandal to the church of CHRIST. If persisted in, it will bring upon you the heavy wrath of GOD.

Our text describes the LORD's supper as a sacrament of remembrance; an affecting commemoration of a SAVIOUR's dying love. “As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the LORD's death till he come.” In the prosecution of

our Lecture upon this subject, we propose to adopt the following method.

First, We shall enquire unto what the bread and cup refer, which are mentioned in the text.

Second, We will consider the object to be kept in view while these are received. "The LORD's death."

Third, We shall illustrate an important truth intimated in our text, that we are to expect an appearance of the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

May GOD sanctify with his blessing whatever we shall advance upon these subjects, consistent with the truth of his word!

First, We are to enquire unto what the bread and cup refer which are mentioned in the text.

The things here named, are the outward and visible signs of the LORD's supper, defined in our Catechism, as "bread and wine which the LORD hath commanded to be received." If we are desirous of knowing what these outward and visible signs intend, we must hear the words of our REDEEMER. It is written, "He took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, this is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of

me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, this cup is the new testament in my blood which is shed for you."\* From this assertion, that part of our Catechism is taken, which speaking with reference to this holy sacrament saith, that the inward part or thing signified by the bread and wine, is "the body and blood of CHRIST, which are verily and indeed taken, and received by the faithful in the LORD's supper." When, therefore, at the sacred table, we eat of this bread, and drink of this cup, our attention should be fixed upon that blessed "LAMB of GOD," whose body was pierced, and whose blood was shed for us men, and for our salvation. It is a believer's privilege to enjoy in this divine ordinance, much comfort from an appropriating view of these objects. He thus beholds that body of the REDEEMER which was bruised for the transgressions of his people. He thus contemplates that precious blood which was shed for himself, and for many, even the whole church of GOD, for the remission of sins. By such a view his soul is refreshed, his faith strengthened, and his hope confirmed; yea, he sometimes is so greatly animated thereby, that he anticipates the joys of heaven; the most glorious light irradiates his mind. He beholds by faith, JESUS CHRIST as his SAVIOUR; and through *him*, enjoyeth peace with GOD. He can then take down his harp from the willows, and sing the LORD's song in this strange land; even that new

\* St. Luke, ch. xxii, ver. 19, 20.



song which is sung by the church triumphant above. "Worthy is the LAMB that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."\* Our Catechism saith, that "the body and blood of CHRIST are verily and indeed taken, and received by the faithful in the LORD's supper." That is, spiritually, and by faith as the means. St. Paul speaks to the same effect; he saith, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of CHRIST? the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of CHRIST?"† The fact is so self evident, that it cannot be denied. The bread, therefore, and cup, spoken of in the text, refer unto that bread and wine which the LORD hath commanded to be received, as a sacramental representation of his own most precious body and blood, which he freely gave for the salvation of sinners. The LORD grant that whenever we eat of this bread, and drink of this cup, we may not rest in the outward and visible sign, but be made partakers of his most blessed body and blood to the strengthening and refreshing of our souls!

Second, We are to consider the object which must be kept in view while this bread and cup are received. "The LORD's death."

\* Rev. ch. v. ver. 12.

† 1 Cor. ch. x. ver. 16.

“The LORD’s death.” It is an amazing expression! Yet not more extraordinary than true. Wonder, O heavens; be astonished, O earth. The mighty GOD, by whose power ye were created, and are now supported; *he* assumed human nature, and as man, died upon the cross to make atonement for the sins of his people. Wherefore the Apostle saith unto the ministers of the gospel, “Feed the church of GOD, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”\* There are many passages of holy scripture where it is asserted that the church was purchased with the precious blood of CHRIST, who is “GOD over all, blessed for ever.” It is written, “*He* gave *himself* for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”† And again, “Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of CHRIST, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot.”‡ This most invaluable price of human redemption was paid upon mount Calvary. There was the LORD JESUS delivered up to death, that guilty men might live for ever. Unto this most important event we must look in the LORD’s supper, not with an eye of speculative curiosity; but of humble faith. The Apostle saith, “I

\* Acts, ch. xx. ver. 28.

† Titus, ch. ii. ver. 14.

‡ 1 Pet. ch. i. ver. 18, 19.

have received of the LORD, that which also I delivered unto you; that the LORD JESUS, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it and said, Take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also, he took the cup when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new Testament in my blood, this do ye as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." In this ordinance of our most holy faith, we are to contemplate our dying LORD. We are to behold *him*, as upon the cross when the soldier pierced his side. His precious blood flowed in copious streams: it procured pardon and peace for the contrite soul. Look therefore unto *him*, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth. His blood cleanseth from all sin. We are taught by our Catechism, that the LORD's supper is designed as a commemoration of his death. That it was ordained "For the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of CHRIST, and of the benefits which we receive thereby." Saith our text, "So often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, *ye do shew the LORD's death.*" Ye exhibit a lively emblem thereof, which is calculated to excite your affections, and under GOD to amend your hearts. In this holy sacrament, we do not commemorate the death of CHRIST merely as an historical fact; no; but as procuring for us the most inestimable benefits. It is an acknowledgement that his blood alone can cleanse our souls from the defilement of iniquity;



that by his righteousness alone we are justified in the sight of GOD, and that his DIVINE SPIRIT sanctifieth us, so that we are made meet for the enjoyment of the heavenly inheritance. Consider, therefore, that when you eat of this bread, and drink of this cup, you thereby profess to renounce all self righteous confidence, and entirely to depend upon what CHRIST hath done and suffered for the salvation of sinners. This is evidently expressed in the following declaration which the minister is directed to make for himself, and the people, at the administration of the holy communion. "We do not presume to come to this thy table, O merciful LORD, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy table; but thou art the same LORD, whose property is always to have mercy." Our dependance upon CHRIST alone, is justified by that assertion of the Apostle, "It hath pleased the FATHER, that in *him* should all fulness dwell."\* Where should a poor helpless sinner apply for relief, but unto the fountain of all grace and blessedness? Upon whom should he who hath nothing, fix his dependance, save on that glorious JESUS in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the GODHEAD bodily? It is an unspeakable mercy that the fulness of grace, the fulness of blessing, the fulness of strength, the fulness of

\* Col. ch. i. ver. 19.

comfort, of peace; in short, an abundance of whatever we can possibly need for time and eternity, is treasured up in the LORD JESUS CHRIST; "Yea for the rebellious also;" for ourselves, who are encouraged in the ordinance of the holy sacrament to shew forth his death, whereby such benefits are procured for us. Those who have an experience of gospel blessings will gladly shew forth the LORD's death in the way of his appointment. They will attend at the holy table with unfeigned humility; their hearts will be melted with holy gratitude to *him* who died for them. They will look on *him* whom they have pierced, and mourn; drops of love will bedew their faces, and they will resolve by the aid of divine grace to glorify GOD in their body and in their spirit which are his. They will retire comforted, and look forward with blessedness to that period, when "Absent from the body, they shall be present with the LORD." May we be such!

Third, We are to illustrate that awful truth intimated in the text, that we are to expect an appearance of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, "Till *He* come." This expression doth not only intimate that the REDEEMER will again appear, but likewise that whenever *his* second appearance shall occur, it will supersede this sacrament of remembrance. The ordinances of the Christian church are not of perpetual duration. They are so many means for the comfort and sustenance of the believer in his pilgrimage through life.

But when the church shall be made complete, when all her members shall have received the promised inheritance, then these being no longer needful shall cease for ever. There are also many branches of christian duty, which will one day terminate. Prayer shall give place to praise, faith to vision, and hope to perpetual enjoyment. This will be accomplished in all the elect of GOD when the REDEEMER shall come, till then they must be cultivated both in heart and life. Our text is not the only part of scripture which asserts the second coming of CHRIST. *He* hath promised it, for *he* saith, "In my FATHER'S house are many mansions." In the heavenly Jerusalem there is sufficient place for the accommodation of every believer. There that innumerable company, selected out of all nations, and kindreds, and tongues, and people, shall walk at large in the glory of GOD. "If it were not so, I would have told you." The faithfulness and love of CHRIST towards his people are such, that he cannot deceive them. "I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there you may be also."\* These things saith the faithful and true witness; and though heaven and earth shall pass away, yet his words shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.

The second appearance of our SAVIOUR will be

\* St. John, ch. xiv. ver. 2, 3.



attended with many awful and affecting circumstances. It is written, "The LORD JESUS shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty Angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not GOD, and that obey not the gospel of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the LORD, and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe."\* These words not only describe the solemnities attendant upon our LORD's advent; they likewise assert the end of his appearance. "Taking vengeance on them that know not GOD, that obey not the gospel of our LORD JESUS CHRIST." Art thou a disobedient character, ignorant of GOD. Be thou hence admonished. *He* whom thou despisest, against whom thou art rebellious, is coming to take vengeance upon the guilty. *He* will punish them with everlasting destruction. "Kiss therefore the SON, lest he be angry, and so thou perishest from the right way when his wrath is kindled, yea but a little." *He* comes likewise with purposes of mercy towards his people. "*He* will be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe." No tongue can utter, no imagination apprehend the glory which shall be conferred upon the redeemed of the LORD. Do any enquire respecting the time of his appearance; are they solicitous to know when it shall take place.

\* 2 Thess. ch. i. ver. 7, to 10.

To such we reply, "It is not for you to know the the times and the seasons, which the FATHER hath put in his own power." There are many cogent reasons why this should not be revealed, none can be assigned why it should. Let such inquisitive persons remember the words of our LORD JESUS; "Know this that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the SON of man cometh."\* *He* may come, ere to-morrow's sun shall gild the eastern heavens; *he* may approach ere the shades of night darken our hemisphere, or his advent may be postponed for a length of time. Yet be this as it may, *he* who should come, will come, and will not tarry; for "The LORD is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness." Know thou, O man, that so far as thou art individually concerned, the day of thy death is to thyself, the time of his advent. Thou wilt then be for ever separated from the things of this world. After death thou must stand at the dread bar of judgment, and then thine eternal state will be unalterably fixed. "It is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment. I admonish thee, O man, of thine approaching dissolution." I testify that the destroyer of thy race is already on his way towards thyself; hark!

hearest thou the solemn sound of the passing bell?  
It will ere long proclaim that thou art numbered with  
the dead. Therefore,

- “ Haste, haste, he lies in wait, he's at the door,
- “ Insidious death! should his strong hand arrest,
- “ No composition sets the prisoner free.
- “ Eternity's inexorable chain
- “ Fast binds, and vengeance claims the full arrear.”

Let your lamps be trimmed, and your lights burning,  
and yourselves like men who wait the arrival of their  
LORD, that when he shall appear, ye may behold  
him with joy.

From what hath been asserted we may learn the  
nature and design of the LORD's supper. It is a  
commemoration of our REDEEMER's dying love, an  
acknowledgement of our dependance upon *him* alone  
for salvation, and a profession that we are by a living  
faith united to *him*, who is the *head* of his church.  
It was never intended by our blessed LORD, that the  
cup, which “is the New Testament in his blood,”  
should be withheld from his people, nor that the bread,  
which is the emblem of his body broken for sinners,  
should be made an object of religious adoration. This  
*holy sacrament* is an ordinance of his appointment,  
designed for the comfort and strengthening of his

\* Young's Night Thoughts.

T



children. May we at all times be enabled to receive it as such!

The truth which hath been advanced speaks in a voice of terror to the unconverted. What will be their state when the LORD shall come to judgment? Then they will call upon rocks, mountains and seas to fall upon them, as a shelter from the wrath of the LAMB. But their cry will not be heard. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget GOD." Could we persuade them to believe these things we should be happy. Their fears might possibly induce them to enquire for a way to escape. We would then with pleasure direct them unto the LORD JESUS, who is able to save unto the uttermost, all them that come unto GOD by *him*, seeing that he ever liveth to make intercession for them. May they be brought unto *him* who alone can rescue their souls from impending destruction!

The same truth affords great encouragement to believers. How may such rejoice when they contemplate the LORD's approach! *He* cometh for their salvation, *he* comes to perfect their redemption, to glorify them, body, soul and spirit in those mansions of peace which he hath prepared for them. Whatever difficulties they may have to encounter, whatever sorrows they may experience, it is their privilege to look forwards with holy confidence and say, "Our present light affliction which is but for a moment,

worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." All our present distress will soon terminate; ere long we shall be safely landed upon those peaceful shores, where "there is no more sickness or death, where the voice of sorrow, and crying is never heard." Let us therefore sing with the good man,

- " Under trials and reproaches,
- " May this thought our courage raise ;
- " Swiftly God's great day approaches,
- " Sighs will then be chang'd to praise.
- " We shall triumph
- " When the world is in a blaze.

GOD grant that this may be our case for the REDEEMER'S sake. Amen.







## LECTURE XVIII.

ST. JOHN, chap. vi. ver. 53.

*Then JESUS said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the SON of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.*

How humiliating is the Apostle's assertion, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the SPIRIT of GOD, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."\* We have an instance of this truth in the chapter which contains the text. It is there related, that the blessed JESUS miraculously fed five thousand persons, with only five loaves, and two small fishes. The spectators of this miracle were so affected therewith, that they desired to invest the SAVIOUR with the regal dignity. But an earthly diadem could have no splendor in his eye, who was accustomed to wear the crown of heaven. He whose kingdom was not of this world, had no desire to possess its frail and transitory honours. "When JESUS therefore saw that they would come and take him by force, to make him

\* 1 Cor. ch. ii. ver. 14.

a king, he departed again into a mountain by himself alone." The people, anxious to discover the place of his retreat, sought him with great diligence. "They took shipping and came to Capernaum seeking for JESUS; and when they had found him, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?" We could rejoice to behold among the men of this generation an equal desire after CHRIST; but they rather endeavour to avoid, than seek to behold *him*. The diligence which these men displayed in their search after the SAVIOUR, might excite a supposition that they would become his disciples. But they were influenced by unworthy motives, and therefore the LORD thus reproveth them. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles that I did, but because ye did eat the loaves and were filled." What numbers of those who now assume the profession of the christian faith are actuated by no purer motives. If, as in the primitive times, church preferment were an introduction to bonds, imprisonment, and death; were temporal advantages altogether separated from the profession of the gospel of CHRIST; it is to be feared that many like the apostatizing Jews, "would go back and walk no more with him." With his reproof our blessed LORD was pleased to connect a most important admonition. "Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life which the SON of man shall give you; for him hath GOD the FATHER sealed." In the sub-

sequent part of the chapter, he thus explaineth this language. "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger, he that believeth on me shall never thirst." And again, "I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead. I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever; and the bread that I will give, is my flesh which I will give for the life of the world." Upon this assertion there was much strife and reasoning among the people. They could not comprehend what they heard, because their minds were carnal. "They strove among themselves, saying, how can this man give us his flesh to eat? They thought that the LORD's words were to be literally explained, and therefore began to discourse upon the possibility and mode of their accomplishment. Then JESUS said unto them, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the SON of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Many of his disciples when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying, who can hear it? When JESUS knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he saith unto them, doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the SON of man ascend up where he was before? It is the SPIRIT that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you they are spirit and life." We are then to understand the text as having reference unto spiritual truths, and we shall explain it by considering,



First, The nature of that life here spoken of.

Second, The means whereby it is to be obtained and preserved as they are herein described.

Third, The necessity of an immediate application unto CHRIST, the PRINCE of life, in the way of his own appointment. May the LORD give us wisdom to speak upon these subjects, as "The oracles of GOD," and to hear so that we may receive the instruction of life!

First, We are to consider the nature of that life referred to in the text.

The word life, as it here occurs, is descriptive of the work of grace, which is carried on in the soul by the power of GOD the HOLY SPIRIT. It is called life, in opposition to the natural state of men, described in holy writ, as a death in trespasses and sins. From this death the LORD's people are raised by the divine power. Hence it is written, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." You, who once were destitute of spiritual life, the LORD hath raised up, having quickened your souls by the power of his BLESSED SPIRIT. St. Paul thus addresseth such characters; "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with CHRIST in GOD; when CHRIST who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear

with him in glory.\* Here the partakers of this grace are spoken of as dead, that is, with respect to the vanities of this sinful world, with the power and love of sin. The life of a believer is hidden. Carnal men know it not; they ridicule the mention thereof as an instance of the grossest enthusiasm. The blessed Apostle, from his own experience, thus describes the same. "I am crucified with CHRIST;" that is to sin, the world, the flesh and the devil; "nevertheless I live," I am made partaker of a new and heavenly existence; "yet not I, but CHRIST liveth in me." This life is neither obtained by my own power, nor preserved by my own care; I derive it from the revelation of CHRIST in my soul, by the power of the holy spirit, and it is preserved by the same means; "For the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the SON of GOD who loved me, and gave himself for me."† As spiritual life is imparted, so it is preserved by the power of GOD. Every converted person lives by the faith of JESUS; by faith which embraceth him as the SAVIOUR; trusts his promises, and depends upon his all sufficient grace. Hence the Apostle saith, "GOD hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his SON: he that hath the SON of GOD hath life." His soul is quickened by the SPIRIT of GOD, and CHRIST is in him the hope of glory. "He that hath not the SON of GOD hath not life." What-

\* Col. ch. iii. ver. 3, 4.

† Gal. ch. ii. ver. 20.

ever professions are made, if we do not live under the influence of the REDEEMER'S SPIRIT, we are none of his; our faith is vain, we are yet in our sins. The life spoken of in the text is also to be considered with reference unto that glory which shall hereafter be revealed in the people of GOD. It is written, "the wages of sin is death; but the gift of GOD is eternal life, through JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD."\* This life is so exalted in its nature, as to exceed the utmost limits of our comprehension; we may however, observe, that it is the perfection of the grace already revealed in the hearts of the redeemed, which indeed is given to prepare them for it; and we are assured in holy scripture that it shall accomplish this purpose. For it is said, "The LORD will give grace and glory."† He gives grace, that is, spiritual life, unto his dear children, as a preparation for glory; and he will give glory, that is, eternal life, as the perfection of grace. These blessings are the gift of GOD through our LORD JESUS CHRIST. If we partake of the one, and live in hope that we shall by the divine mercy attain unto the other, with the Apostle we can say, "Thanks be to GOD for his unspeakable gift."

Second, We are to contemplate the means whereby this life is obtained and preserved as they are described in the text. "Verily, verily, I say

\* Rom. ch. vi. ver. 23.

† Psalm, lxxxiv. ver. 11.



unto you, except *ye eat the flesh of the SON of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.*"

GOD hath been graciously pleased in compassion to the ignorance of our nature, to reveal unto us spiritual truths under significant emblems taken from the things of time and sense. This method is adopted in the text, which describes a believing reception of CHRIST in all his offices, unto the salvation of the soul, as "eating his flesh, and drinking his blood." It is easy to perceive that this passage will not admit of any other explication. The Romish absurdity that the body of CHRIST is literally to be eaten, and his blood drank, is too gross to need a refutation.

This assertion must be understood with reference to those communications of divine grace with which the LORD favors his people; and it inculcates this truth, the souls of the redeemed are strengthened and refreshed by these gracious manifestations, as their bodies are by suitable food and nourishment. Or to express myself in the language of our Catechism, his soul "is strengthened and refreshed by the body and blood of CHRIST as his body is by the bread and wine." The spiritual life is supported by a species of nourishment adapted thereunto. Saith our blessed LORD, "I am the true vine, and my FATHER is the husbandman; abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am

the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me, ye can do nothing.\* The nourishment, then, of our spiritual life is derived from the LORD JESUS CHRIST. It is received in an holy communion, an intercourse with himself. For as the sap, which riseth from the root, nourisheth the branches, causing them to grow, and bring forth fruit, so the grace of the REDEEMER communicated to the souls of his people, supports in them the life of GOD, and enables them to glorify him by "the peaceable fruits of righteousness." Our blessed LORD is called the PRINCE of life; and it is also said of him, "Though he were a SON, yet learned he obedience by the things which *he* suffered; and being made perfect, *he* became the AUTHOR of eternal salvation, unto all that obey *him*; called of GOD an HIGH PRIEST, after the order of Melchisedec."† By the sufferings and death of the REDEEMER, the life of his people was obtained. He saith, "I am come that they might have life; and that they might have it more abundantly." *He* imparts this grace unto their souls in the use of certain means, which he hath been pleased to appoint for that purpose. This great work is generally effected by the preaching of the gospel. Saith the Psalmist, "The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart,

\* St. John, ch. xv. ver. 1, 4, 5. † Heb. ch. v. ver. 8, 9, 10.

the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes"\* The Apostle also saith, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of GOD." Every blessing which respects our spiritual existence, proceeds from JESUS. *He* is the great AUTHOR and FINISHER of our faith. And if we have received *him* as our SAVIOUR, if we live in daily dependance upon his power and goodness, we may be said in a spiritual view, to eat his flesh, and drink his blood. Thus we have life, and thus it is maintained within us. The body and blood of CHRIST are also spiritually received in the LORD's supper. The bread and wine are there introduced as the sign of these. A believer is enabled to look through the sign unto the thing signified. The body and blood of CHRIST are verily and indeed taken, and received by the faithful in this holy sacrament. They derive therefrom the greatest benefits. For their souls are thereby "strengthened and refreshed, as their bodies are by the bread and wine." They come to the holy table oppressed with a sense of weakness; and they obtain needful strength. They come faint and weary, but their souls are refreshed; and they are enabled to rejoice in the LORD. There the servant of JESUS beholds so lively a representation of *his* MASTER's dying love, as must greatly affect his mind; and while confiding in the DIVINE faithfulness, he receives the outward and

\* Psalm, xix. ver. 7, 8.



visible sign; he is also made a partaker of the thing signified. He can then explain the declaration made in the text; for he then knows what it is spiritually and by faith “to eat the flesh of the SON of *man*, and to drink his blood.” All his graces are by these means invigorated. His love is increased, his hope confirmed, his faith strengthened, his zeal and activity enlarged, so that to adopt the language of scripture, “he is like a young roe, or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether.” Thus he is enabled to run with patience the race that is set before him, looking unto JESUS. Thus he experienceth the comfort of waiting upon GOD, and departs greatly refreshed in spirit.

In this most solemn ordinance, as we are taught by our church, the body of CHRIST is given, taken, and eaten only after a spiritual manner; and the mean whereby the body is received and eaten in the supper is faith.\* This assertion is found true in the experience of believers; for they are thus enabled to receive it; and thereby learn the truth of their SAVIOUR’S words, “Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living FATHER hath sent me, and I live by

\* See XXVIIIth Article of Religion.

the FATHER, even so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." By the use of these means, the divine life is maintained in the soul. May we have frequent recourse unto them, and experience the blessings they were designed to convey !

Third, We are to shew the necessity of an immediate application unto CHRIST the PRINCE of life, in the way *he* hath been pleased to appoint.

The language of the text sufficiently demonstrates the need of an instant address unto the SAVIOUR. " Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the SON of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." Unless, therefore, we are united by faith to JESUS, unless we daily receive from his fulness grace to supply our want, and enable us to increase in the knowledge and love of *him*, our profession is vain, and though we may have a name to live, yet we are " dead in trespasses and sins." This awful truth is repeatedly asserted in the sacred writings. Saith the Apostle, " Know ye not your own selves, how that JESUS CHRIST is in you, except ye be reprobates."\* And again, " If any man have not the SPIRIT of CHRIST, he is none of his."† It is also written, " He that believeth on the SON, hath everlasting life ; he that believeth not the SON, shall

\* 2 Cor. ch. xiii. ver. 5.

† Rom. ch. viii. ver. 9.

not see life; but the wrath of GOD abideth on him."\* If these things be true, an immediate application unto CHRIST is necessary, for the security of our eternal happiness. We shall confirm this fact, by observing that present neglect of JESUS may occasion final misery. The promises of holy scripture are addressed unto those whose compliance with its blessed invitations is instant. Each of them assures the penitent that mercy may *now* be obtained; but in none is it intimated, that this will be the case at a future period. The contrary is asserted. For it is written, "*To day* if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts."† It is also said, "Because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity, and will mock when your fear cometh. When your fear cometh as a desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you, then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me; for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD."‡ Our cry for mercy may be possibly too late. We know, that at present this is not the case. We are assured that "*now* is the accepted time, *now* is the day of salvation." To morrow may be the

\* St. John, ch. iii. ver. 36.      † Psalm, xcv. ver. 7, 8.

‡ Prov. ch. i. ver. 24 to 29.



day of judgment and of vengeance. This is an awful reflection; it inculcates the necessity of an immediate application unto CHRIST, that we may be saved from the wrath to come. This application must be made in the way he hath appointed. Those who desire to find, must seek in a diligent use of the means of grace. Thus sought, JESUS will be found of us to our eternal peace. “*He is able and willing to save to the uttermost all those who come unto GOD by him.*”

The truth we have asserted, suggests the subsequent remarks.

First, That by nature, men are in a state of spiritual death. This melancholy fact is asserted in holy writ, and confirmed by observation. It is written, “Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and CHRIST shall give thee life.” Unconverted men are also compared to “the deaf adder, which refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely.” Experience confirms these descriptions. We see that men live regardless of GOD and eternity. We perceive that they have naturally no desire after *him*, nor do they exert themselves to obtain “a treasure in heaven,” until the LORD hath quickened them by his SPIRIT. May he animate those who are dead in trespasses and sins!

Second, We remark, that none but JESUS can

U

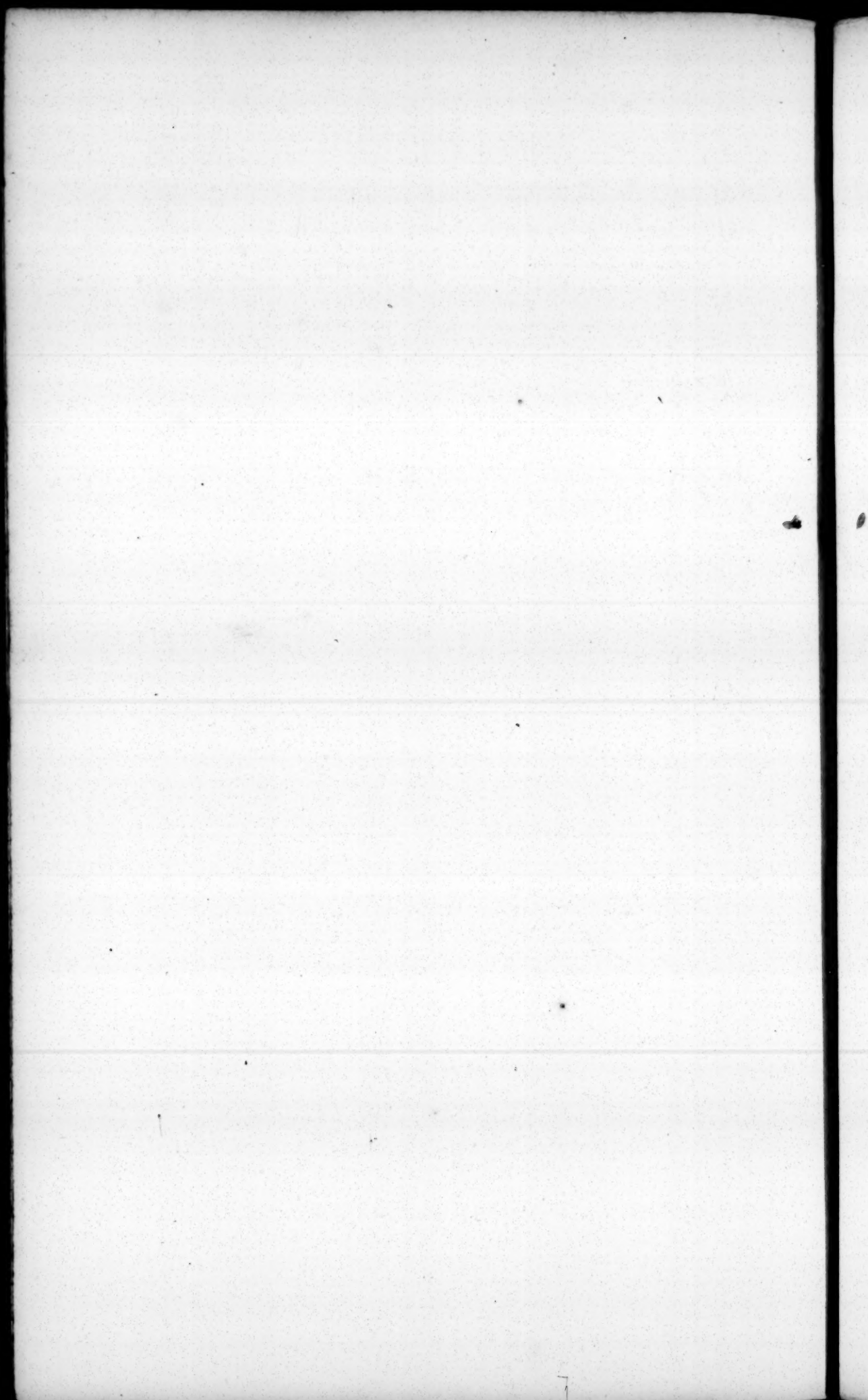
rescue the soul from this sad estate. All the boasted exertions of human reason are unable to accomplish this great deliverance. Those fine spun systems of morality which have been invented and propagated with such diligence, are in this respect of no efficacy. But the gospel. This hath "brought life and immortality to light." This proclaimeth "liberty to the captives, the opening of the prison to them that are bound;" yea, life to the dead. Let it be observed, that a mere profession of the gospel will not effect this work. In order to our deliverance from spiritual death, we must experience the power thereof. "CHRIST must be in us, the hope of glory." We must be born again of the HOLY SPIRIT. If this be once obtained, our deliverance from spiritual death is thereby secured. May GOD effect this in every heart.

Third, We remark, that those who desire to obtain deliverance from spiritual death, and all its attendant horrors, must seek it of CHRIST, who alone is "the way, and the truth, and the life." It is written, "*Him* hath GOD set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood." And again, "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." How vain then is their hope, who expect salvation as the reward of their own good works! Such buildings are founded upon the sand; whenever the storm shall arise and beat upon them, they will fall, and great will be the

fall thereof. Lean not upon an arm of flesh; but apply unto JESUS, who is a complete SAVIOUR. Trust in *him* alone. So shall your house be built upon a rock, and remain firm for ever. You cannot otherwise be secure; for there is no other deliverer. Hence ariseth the necessity of an application unto *him*. We must either make that or perish. May GOD ALMIGHTY give us grace in this our day, to know the things that pertain unto our peace! May he make us wise unto salvation, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. Amen!







## LECTURE XIX.

---

1 CORINTHIANS, ch. xi. ver. 28.

*But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.*

IN our former Lectures upon the LORD's supper, we have had occasion to describe the nature of that ordinance, the end of its institution, and the benefits which are derived from a believing reception thereof. We are now to consider the duty which is required of those who attend this holy sacrament. Our text is replete with information upon this subject. It was indeed designed as a perpetual command to regulate the conduct of those who approach the LORD's table. The duty it enjoins is worthy of a serious and unremitting attention, even though it be not performed with a view to the commemoration of the SAVIOUR's death. For it is always necessary that we should know ourselves; that we should be acquainted with our situation in regard to death, judgment, and eternity; and we cannot acquire this valuable information without attention to the precept before us, "Let a man examine himself." Thus he

shall know his real character and condition. It is indispensably requisite that we should examine ourselves with the greatest impartiality, ere we presume to celebrate the LORD's supper. The neglect of this occasions many to eat of that bread, and drink of that cup unto their own condemnation. If we would avoid so dreadful an evil, let us attend unto the Apostolical admonition, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." As these words are evidently designed for the direction of those who "mind to come unto the holy communion of the body and blood of CHRIST our SAVIOUR," we shall confine ourselves to that view of the subject, which, by the divine assistance, we propose to contemplate in the following manner.

First, We shall explain the nature of that examination which St. Paul here recommends. "Let a man examine himself."

Second, We will shew the necessity of self-examination, in order to a proper reception of the LORD's supper, as intimated in the text. "So let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup."

Let thine HOLY SPIRIT, O LORD, enable us to speak and hear as we ought, upon these important subjects.

First, We are to explain the nature of that ex-



amination which St. Paul here recommends. "Let a man examine himself."

Those who are suspected of any particular crimes, are examined in the presence of the judge, that their innocence or guilt may be known. Upon these occasions the utmost impartiality must be observed, that the decision may be righteous. Precious metals, as gold and silver, are examined by fire; both to ascertain, and increase their purity. There is in the sacred writings a fine allusion to this practice. The Prophet, speaking of the REDEEMER, saith, "He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap. And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness."\* The examination spoken of in the text is similar to these. The design thereof is to discover the sincerity of our religious professions. The questions to be urged are of this nature. Am I converted and become as a little child? Have I in my heart, conduct and conversation, the evidences of a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness? Or, having a name to live, am I as yet dead in trespasses and sins? This examination is a strict and impartial scrutiny of the heart; an enquiry whether its dispositions are consistent with the divine will; whether it be endowed with that

\* Mal. ch. iii. ver. 2, 3.

“holiness without which no man can see the LORD?” An examination which respects such important objects, must not be superficial; it must be close and particular. The written word of GOD is the law whereby it must be regulated. To this unerring test every thought of the heart, every word of the mouth, and every act of the life must be brought; and they are to receive approbation or censure, as they are found conformable or contrary to the sacred precepts. Unless our self-examination be thus ordered, it will prove unprofitable. We shall not obtain thereby a more correct knowledge of ourselves. This duty is enforced in many parts of holy scripture. It is written, “Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still.”\* Be serious in your enquiries respecting the state of your soul. In your most retired moments let it occupy your care and attention. Yea, “upon your bed commune with your own heart.” You are indeed laid down thereon to seek repose, but you may never rise again. You may be lifted thence and placed in a coffin, or ere the morning dawns, yourself and your dwelling may be consumed by devouring flames. At this solemn period, therefore, while an interposing veil of darkness conceals from your sight the world, with its alluring vanities, examine your own heart. Lift it up in earnest prayer to GOD, that it may be cleansed from its pollutions; delivered from the oppressive bondage

• Psalm, iv. ver. 4.

of satan; and brought into the service of GOD, which is perfect freedom. Such an examination cannot be properly conducted without the gracious assistance of GOD the HOLY SPIRIT. Hence the Psalmist prayed thus, "Search me, O GOD, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me; and lead me in the way everlasting."\* May we be enabled to imitate his conduct. We are commanded thus to examine ourselves. Indeed the judgment or condemnation of others is not within our province. Our blessed LORD hath forbidden us to intermeddle therewith. *He* saith, "Judge not, and ye shall not be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned."† St. Paul likewise asserts the folly and wickedness of such a conduct. "Who art thou, that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth."‡ Leave, therefore, O man, all judgment respecting others to GOD; and be it thy care, diligently to examine thyself; for remember, that "GOD will bring into judgment every work, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."§ In the great day of account, thou wilt not be questioned respecting others; thou wilt never be required to answer for the crimes or follies of thy neighbour. GOD knows, and if thou art taught of *him*, thou knowest thyself, that thou art

\* Psalm, cxxxix. ver. 23, 24.

† St. Luke. ch. vi. ver. 37.

‡ Rom. ch. xiv. ver. 4.

§ Eccl. ch. xii. ver. 14.



a sinner, and therefore hast no right to cast the stone at another. Awake, awake, O conscience, perform thine office. Plead the cause of an offended CREATOR. Summon each sinner to thy tribunal; and may GOD enable thee to shew him his guilt in all its native deformity! Examine thyself, O man, inspect thine own heart, see there, concealed from outward view, lurks thy darling lust; behold there thy pride, thy self-sufficiency, which disposes thee to reject CHRIST; to judge and condemn thy poor brother, who, in the sight of GOD, may be more acceptable than thyself, "For the LORD seeth not as man seeth." Behold there thine unbelief; thy love of the world; thy criminal indifference respecting the things of GOD, if not thine utter aversion to *him*. In fact, thou mayest there discover the seeds of every enormity. Sit, therefore, in close and impartial judgment upon thine heart, and be it thy constant endeavour to know thyself.

If we contemplate self-examination with reference to a suitable reception of the LORD's supper, the nature of it is explained in the Catechism. We are here taught, that the duty of those who come to the LORD's supper, is, "to examine themselves whether they repent them truly of their former sins, stedfastly purposing to lead a new life, have a lively faith in GOD's mercy through CHRIST, with a thankful remembrance of his death, and be in charity with

all men." The subjects, then, respecting which we must examine ourselves, are the following.

First, Whether we repent us truly of our former sins. The nature of evangelical repentance hath been already described. Let each enquire, Hath CHRIST imparted unto me that gift of grace, true repentance? Have I learned, from a conviction of its malignant and destructive nature, to abhor sin? Am I grieved in heart on account of my repeated transgressions? Do I stedfastly purpose, by the help of GOD, to lead a new life? These are questions which every one should propose to himself. They form a part of that self-examination upon the subject of repentance, which is requisite, that we may worthily partake of the "bread and wine which the LORD hath commanded to be received."

Second, We must examine ourselves, whether we "have a lively faith in GOD's mercy through CHRIST." An humble confidence that we shall obtain acceptance with GOD through the all-sufficient merits of the REDEEMER. We are not merely to enquire, if we give a speculative assent unto the truth of the gospel. If this be the extent of our confidence, it is not worthy to be called faith. Unto those who thus believe, we may apply the language of St. James; "Thou believest that there is one GOD thou doest well; the devils also believe and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that

faith without works is dead."\* Our enquiries upon this subject should be these, Have I that faith which is of the operation of the HOLY SPIRIT, which purifieth the heart, and worketh powerfully by love? Not a cold inert sentiment, but a lively and active principle which fills the heart with love to JESUS, and stimulates the man to the most noble exertions for *his* glory who died to redeem his people from death. Examine yourselves concerning this matter with impartiality and seriousness: for it is written, "Without faith, it is impossible to please GOD."

Third, We are to examine ourselves whether we have a thankful remembrance of CHRIST'S death. If our hearts are sanctified through faith which is in *him*, we shall certainly possess such a recollection. For being thus made partakers of every gospel blessing, we shall contemplate with the most unfeigned gratitude, that grand event, which made "Reconciliation for iniquity." Under the influence of this truth we shall adopt that song of praise, "Thou art worthy for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to GOD by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation."† It is thought right to cherish a grateful remembrance of those who have been friends to ourselves, or have deserved well of their country. It is much more requisite to record with thankful hearts the dying love of our blessed SAVIOUR.

\* St. James, ch. ii. ver. 19, 20.

† Revel. ch. v. ver. 9.



He who can contemplate this event with cold indifference gives others great reason to suppose that he is "in the gall of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity." Is this our case? Or have we a thankful remembrance of the death of CHRIST? Examine yourselves in respect to this matter.

Fourth, It is our duty to enquire whether we are "in charity with all men." If we are experimentally acquainted with the glorious gospel, we shall indeed "love one another." It is written, "Beloved, let us love one another for love is of GOD, and every one that loveth is born of GOD, and knoweth GOD. He that loveth not, knoweth not GOD; for GOD is love."\* The religion of JESUS is most amiable in its nature and tendency. It subdues, and eradicates those evil dispositions of "envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness," which are the bane of human happiness. It annihilates those conceited views of prejudice and bigotry, which interrupt the harmony of the church, and obstruct the religious intercourse of Christians. It expands the heart, and inclines its happy possessor to esteem with truly fraternal affection, all who love the LORD JESUS CHRIST in sincerity and truth. Inspect your own hearts. Are you thus in charity with all men? Have you learned to requite evil with good? To render blessing for cursing, imitating his conduct, of whom ye say, He is

\* 1 John, ch. iv. ver. 7, 8.

our LORD? It is our duty to propose these or similar questions to our own hearts. May GOD the HOLY SPIRIT shed abroad in our souls the constraining love of JESUS! We shall then love as brothers, all his people however distinguished by a variety of denominations among men. So far with regard to the nature of that self-examination which the text requires. "Let a man examine himself." The LORD give us grace to obey the important precept!

Second, We are to shew the necessity of self-examination, in order to a suitable reception of the LORD's supper, as intimated in the text. "So let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup."

These words evidently imply that none should presume to approach the LORD's table, who hath not diligently inspected his own heart. He should do this as in the sight of GOD "from whom no secrets are hid." Let him enquire whether he is indeed a renewed character; whether the precepts of the gospel are exemplified in his life and conversation? If upon an impartial review he finds that his case is such, then let him approach the LORD's table, and with meek gratitude "so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." On the other hand, if conscience testi-fieth against him that he hath neither repentance, nor obedience, nor faith, nor love, let him abstain from the holy feast, nor dare to profane so sacred an ordinance by an unworthy participation thereof. The text thus

viewed affords a most convincing proof that a diligent self-inspection is requisite for all who would worthily commemorate the LORD's death.

We approach the holy table to profess our sorrow for sin, and our resolution by the all sufficient aid of divine grace to walk in obedience to the commandments of GOD. Upon these solemn occasions we also assert, our lively faith in the divine mercy through JESUS the SAVIOUR; our grateful recollection of his dying love, and we affirm that under the influence of his constraining mercy, "we are in charity with all men." We can only ascertain the justice of these professions by a serious scrutiny of our own hearts, by comparing the dispositions thereof with the sound precepts of the sacred volume. For holy scripture is a glass wherein if we look with attention, we shall behold our own resemblance, and thus learn what manner of persons we are. If we would not offend GOD by asserting in his presence, and at his table, that we entertain sentiments with which our hearts are totally unacquainted, we must diligently attend unto this very thing.

It is also necessary that we enquire minutely into the state of our own hearts, ere we partake of the LORD's supper, that we may not expose ourselves to condemnation by approaching his table in an unholy frame of mind. St. Paul saith, "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation



to himself, not discerning the LORD's body." He who comes to this table with an unsanctified spirit doth thereby convert an wholesome food into a deadly poison. This most comfortable sacrament is made unto him as it were, "a savour of death unto death." "He eateth and drinketh damnation to himself." Not irrevocable misery, but present sorrow and trouble, yea in some cases death itself. Hence the Apostle saith, "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." Would you avoid this punishment? Examine then your own hearts. "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the LORD that we should not be condemned with the world." These united considerations clearly evince the necessity of self-examination ere we present ourselves at the LORD's table.

The truth which we have asserted teacheth us for what manner of persons the LORD's supper is designed. It was not instituted for the hypocritical professor, and much less for the openly prophane. Some such indeed,

"Have made the symbols of atoning grace  
An office key, a pick-lock to a place.  
And infidels have prov'd their title good,  
By an oath dipp'd in sacramental blood."\*

The holy sacrament is a believer's ordinance, it is in-

\* Cowper.

tended to strengthen and refresh the LORD's redeemed, who, as their hearts do not condemn them, have confidence towards GOD. The LORD make us such characters.

We also observe from what hath been said, what care we should take, that we may not receive the LORD's supper in an unworthy manner. When we approach the table of an earthly friend, we are studious of propriety and decorum. Our appearance is neat, our deportment modest, and we endeavour so to conduct ourselves as to secure the good opinion of all who are present. If it be necessary to be thus circumspect in the presence of a friend, how much more is it so, at the table of GOD. Upon these solemn occasions we should "lift up holy hands without wrath or doubting." If we consider the fatal consequences of neglect, it will dispose us to cry unto GOD for help, from whom alone cometh "the preparation of the heart, and the answer of the tongue in man."

We may also learn from what hath been advanced, the necessity of diligent prayer unto GOD, that we may be enabled to celebrate the ordinances of our most holy faith in a suitable manner. The renewal and sanctification of the heart appertaineth unto GOD by whom it was created. It must therefore be sought of him. He saith indeed, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of

your flesh; and I will give you an heart of flesh."\* Encouraged by this promise may we call upon *him*, who is able to do exceeding abundant above all that we can ask or think, or are worthy to receive. And may he bestow upon us every needful blessing for time and eternity, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. Amen!

\* Ezek. ch. xxxvi. ver. 26.





## LECTURE XX.

2 TIM. ch. i. ver. 13.

*Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me in faith, and love which is in CHRIST JESUS.*

THE second Epistle to Timothy, is supposed to have been the last which St. Paul wrote. The following declaration gives probability to this idea; "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight: I have finished my course; I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the LORD, the righteous JUDGE, shall give me at that day, and not to me only but unto all them also, that love his appearing." We may therefore contemplate the text as a final caution given by this great Apostle unto Timothy his own son in the faith. It is as though St. Paul had said, I have instructed thee in the faith of JESUS; I have taught thee a form of words, which are called sound, not merely on account of their truth, but because they produce the most blessed effects in the soul. As the hour of my disso-

lution approaches, I charge thee, for the last time, to "hold them fast." Adhere to them with constancy and zeal. Keep them "in faith," a firm conviction of their truth, an experimental knowledge of their efficacy "and love," a fervent affection towards them, "which is in CHRIST JESUS," which hath *him* as its source, object, and end. This precept is likewise addressed unto us. For the form of sound words which was committed to Timothy, is communicated to us "in these last days." We possess the lively oracles of God. We enjoy the light of the blessed gospel; we are favored with the ordinances of the divine appointment. These are privileges of which we should be tenacious. We should "hold them fast in faith and love which is in CHRIST JESUS." The LORD enable us so to do.

In the prosecution of our Lecture, we purpose.

First, To enquire respecting the import of that expression "the form of sound words."

Second, We shall endeavour to explain the precept, "Hold fast the form of sound words."

Third, We shall point out the method of attaining to steadfastness in the faith as described in the text. "In faith and love which is in CHRIST JESUS."

May the LORD bless the word of his grace, as a means of salvation unto each of our souls!

First, We are to enquire respecting the import of that expression, "the form of sound words."

It hath been asserted, that St. Paul here refers to a compendium of the christian faith, a species of catechism drawn up either by himself, or by Timothy under his own direction. We apprehend that he alludes to the gospel; which form of sound words, he was under GOD the honored instrument of bringing to the knowledge of this young man whom he therefore calleth his dearly beloved Son. The two epistles addressed to this minister inculcate the important doctrines of the gospel. The former particularly describes the duties of the pastoral office and the manner in which they should be performed. In the latter St. Paul exhibits a pleasing view of the gospel as a system of free grace. He nobly asserts that GOD "hath saved and called us with an holy calling, not according to our own works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in CHRIST JESUS, before the world began." He likewise gives many excellent precepts to regulate the conduct, predicts the numerous heresies which would infest the church in the latter ages, and concludes with an affecting declaration of his confidence in the living GOD. These epistles are to be considered as "a form of sound words," because they were written by inspiration of the HOLY SPIRIT; and the truths they teach, promote the health of the soul. As they were addressed to Timothy, it is probable that St. Paul



referred to them in that command, "Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me." In its most extensive reference, the term "sound words" appertains unto the holy scriptures, both of the old and new Testament. These contain every requisite information, to make men wise for eternity. And those who experience the power of the truths therein revealed, can testify that they bring life and health to the soul. The Psalmist saith, "The law of the LORD is perfect converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple, the statutes of the LORD are right rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes."\* May this form of sound words be the sole standard of our faith and practice!

Every compendium of religion which is so extracted from the sacred writings as to accord with their general tendency, may be considered as a form of sound words; yet it cannot be asserted that the Apostle had such systems in his mind when he wrote the precept before us. Nevertheless so far as they consist with the written word of God it may be so applied.

We have lately attempted to confirm your faith in that excellent summary of true religion, the church Catechism, which may be called a form of sound

\* Psalm, xix. ver. 7, 9.

words, inasmuch as it accords with the declarations of holy writ. We are there taught that man is a sinner by nature ; that he hath no foundation of hope towards GOD, but our LORD JESUS CHRIST who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. It is also written, "Thou shalt love the LORD thy GOD with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself."\* These doctrines and precepts are so clearly explained, and so happily enforced in the Catechism, that the most unlearned may understand, and the most insensible must feel. We trust after what hath been advanced at different times upon this subject, we may be allowed to say with reference thereunto, "hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me in faith and love which is in CHRIST JESUS."

Second, We are to attempt an explanation of the precept, "hold fast the form of sound words."

In this, as in the former epistle, St. Paul predicts a great apostacy from the faith. He saith, "Now the SPIRIT speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils. Speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and com-

\* St. Luke, ch. x. ver. 27.

manding to abstain from meats which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth."\* This prophecy hath been in a great measure explained by its accomplishment. The precept in our text was designed to confirm Timothy in the truth he had received, and the defection of others is mentioned, to excite him to retain with firmness "the faith once delivered to the saints." Indeed a great or general departure from the truth and purity of the gospel, should occasion greater zeal and constancy in those who retain the profession thereof. For if the cause be likely to sustain an injury by the secession of pretended friends, it is indispensably requisite that those who continue therein should strive by increasing diligence to counteract the baneful effect of such a departure. The precept before us may be illustrated by the subsequent injunctions of holy writ. "Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour, whom resist, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."† Sobriety and vigilance are no doubt necessary to a perseverance in the faith of the gospel. It is also written, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong."‡ He who desires to "hold fast the form of sound words which he hath

\* 1 Tim. ch. iv. ver. 1, to 3. † 1 Pet. ch. v. ver. 8, 9.

‡ 1 Cor. ch. xvi. ver. 13.



heard," must be strong in the LORD, and in the power of his might. He must take unto him "the whole armour of GOD, that he may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand." May we have grace so to do! The injunction before us requires a constant and steady adherence unto the blessed gospel. It directs us to be always vigilant, lest at any time our constancy should be shaken; and prepared with meekness and fear, to answer those who ask a reason of the hope that is in us. This command supposes, that we are convinced of the truth of the gospel; persuaded of its divine origin and experimentally acquainted with its renovating powers. It also implies that we study the gospel; that our "delight is to meditate therein by day and night," and that we are resolved through grace to "be steadfast unto death." If such principles are implanted in the heart, they will occasion a zealous activity in the defence of the gospel; they will excite a determined resistance to whatever opposes the truth, whether it be found in ourselves or in others, and this resistance will be conducted with meekness, candour, and benevolence.

Such an adherence to the cause of GOD can only be accomplished by his ALMIGHTY aid. Would you "hold fast the form of sound words?" Apply then unto GOD for grace to persevere. Adopt the following expressive petition, it was that of an eminent saint, "Hold up my goings in thy paths, that

my footsteps slip not. Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings.\* This prayer, if granted, will ensure perseverance; otherwise it cannot be attained.

Suffer, we entreat you, the word of exhortation; "Hold fast the form of sound words." If ever the necessity of the times could justify or enforce the precept, this is the period. We have beheld great and alarming instances of defection from the faith. Infidelity once the exclusive, always the unenviable property of a few in the higher walks of life, hath now an awful prevalence among the lowest of the people. Modern philosophy attempts to supersede revelation; in many instances it hath proved successful; and the enemies of our peace are watching for that moment when they may deprive us of our dearest privileges. Surely then, those who love the cause of GOD and CHRIST, should now interfere. Let them "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." I call upon you, to hold fast in the strength of GOD, that form of sound words with which ye are favored in a scriptural, and well constituted establishment. Be not seduced from the purity of the faith by men of an insidious disposition; who, while they "promise you liberty, are themselves the servants of corruption." "My son, fear thou GOD and the king, and meddle not with them who

\* Psalm, xvii. ver. 5 and 8.

are given to change." May GOD ALMIGHTY send his HOLY SPIRIT to write in every heart the precept we have considered; may *he* enable us to continue steadfast in the faith as we have been taught, and to grow daily in the knowledge and love of our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Third, We are to point out the method of attaining unto steadfastness in the faith as described in the text; "in faith and love, which is in CHRIST JESUS."

In this latter clause of the text we are presented with the complete armour of a *christian*, which in another place is thus described: "Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the SPIRIT, which is the word of GOD, praying always with all prayer and supplication in the SPIRIT, and watching thereunto with all perseverance."\* Whoever intends to "hold fast the form of sound words" committed unto him, will find the whole of this armour necessary. He must take it, yea, and bring it forth into daily use. For constant exertion is

\* Eph. ch. vi. ver. 14 to 18.



necessary, that perseverance in the faith may be ensured. The expressions which occur in this part of our text, claim our attention: "in faith and love, which is in CHRIST JESUS." Let us meditate upon them. "In faith." Now "faith is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen."\* It is not merely an assent of the understanding unto the truths we profess to retain; but an heartfelt knowledge of their power. Such a belief as is wrought in the heart by the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD. The man who is endowed with this grace, thus contemplates the gospel. I believe that CHRIST is a SAVIOUR; because through grace I partake of his salvation. He hath reconciled me unto GOD by his most precious blood. He hath quickened my soul, once dead in sin, by the power of his SPIRIT; He supports me day by day, and I trust that *he* who hath begun a good work in my soul, will "present me faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." Thus "faith is the substance of things hoped for." It is an hand whereby the soul receives the blessings of redemption. It is also the evidence of things which are not visible to the carnal eye. It enables the man to look beyond this dark vale of tears, to the promised "land of pure delight." Yea, when it is in lively exercise, he anticipates the joys of heaven. He saith, Yet a little while, and this earthly tabernacle shall be taken down; then shall I enter

\* Heb. ch. xi, ver. 1.

that "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," where I shall dwell for ever. There shall I be made like unto *him* whom my soul loveth; I shall be with *him* in his glory. How desirable is that faith which thus entereth within the veil! May the LORD impart it unto our souls!

The Apostle also saith, "and love." Not merely a professional respect or attachment, but the love of GOD shed abroad in the heart by the HOLY SPIRIT. If our soul be thus sanctified by divine love, we shall cleave unto our GOD with full purpose of heart. We shall highly prize his word and truth. Yea, we shall "count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of CHRIST JESUS our LORD." This love is a fruit and evidence of saving faith. For it is written, "faith which worketh by love," worketh, by producing in the heart and conduct the peaceable fruits of righteousness, which are to the glory of GOD. This expression includes an affection for "all who love the LORD JESUS CHRIST in sincerity and truth." Saith the Apostle, "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of GOD, and every one that loveth, is born of GOD, and knoweth GOD."\* And again, "Every one that loveth *him* that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of *him*."† To this it is added, "which is in CHRIST JESUS." Faith which embraceth *him* as the SAVI-

\* 1 John, ch. iv. ver. 7.

† Ibid. ch. v. ver. 1.

OUR, which receives *him* into the heart, reclines upon his gracious promises; lives upon *him* from day to day; was produced by *him*; hath as its object, JESUS CHRIST, and *him* crucified. Love to *him*, produced in the soul by an experience of his grace and mercy; a fervent affection to *his* gospel, *his* commandments, and *his* dear children. These graces, these “fruits of the SPIRIT,” are the most likely means to produce a resolute adherence unto the “truth of GOD.” Yea, where these are indeed found, there will also be a perseverance unto the end. All such, being kept “faithful unto death, shall receive the crown of life.” We may indeed be assured, that if GOD hath imparted unto the soul that faith and love which behold CHRIST as their AUTHOR, OBJECT, and END; he will also give grace “to hold fast the form of sound words.” For “faithful is *he* that calleth you, who also will do it.” Let, therefore, all who are emulous of perseverance in the faith, seek the accomplishment of their desire in an experience of gospel grace; even “in faith and love, which is in CHRIST JESUS.”

From what hath been advanced, we may observe, that the gospel is an important trust which GOD hath committed unto our charge. Saith the Apostle, “We were allowed of GOD to be put in trust with the gospel.” He considered the dispensation of the gospel, as a solemn deposit which the LORD had entrusted him, and of which he should one



day render an account to the JUDGE of quick and dead. The same is the case, not only with ministers, but likewise with private christians. To them it is said, "As every man hath received the gift, so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of GOD."\* This talent is neither to be buried in the earth, nor wrapped in a napkin; it must be employed in the service of GOD; to the glory of *his* name, and for the edification of the church. Believer, thou art a steward of GOD. He hath committed to thy keeping a trust of the most sacred nature. Take thou care to "hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast received, in faith and love which is in CHRIST JESUS."

We also observe, that this solemn trust must be discharged with constancy and faithfulness. "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." Let us ever recollect, that the servant whose condemnation was so awful, had not embezzled his lord's talent. His only crime was that he did not improve it. "He which had received the one talent, came and said, Lord, I knew thee, that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed; and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth; lo, there thou hast that is thine." Such an excuse could not be admitted. It was therefore said, "Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, there shall be

\* 1 Pet. ch. iv. ver. 10.

weeping and gnashing of teeth.”\* Let us learn from so affecting an example, to be diligent, active, and constant in the preservation of that deposit which the LORD hath committed unto us. May we retain the form of sound words, experience their power in our hearts; and display their purity in our life and deportment. Thus may we be found in peace of GOD at *his* coming to judgment.

Lastly, from what hath been said, we learn the necessity of constant prayer unto GOD for the aid of his grace. We are not able of ourselves to retain with constancy the truth as it is in JESUS. If we are forsaken of GOD, and unsupported by *him*, we shall apostatize, we shall even “deny the LORD that bought us.” The influences of grace, and their continuance are to be sought by prayer to GOD. He saith, “I will yet be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do for them.” Let us, therefore, by prayer and supplication, seek the assistance of our HEAVENLY FATHER, that we may be firm and constant in his cause. Let us intreat *him* to preserve us unshaken by the frowns or the allurements of an evil world; by the malice and treachery of satan, and by the deceitfulness of our own hearts; that so having retained with fidelity his divine truth, we may be admitted to his kingdom and glory, through our LORD JESUS CHRIST. Amen! 5 MA 56

\* St. Matt. ch. xxv. ver. 24, 25 and 30.

AN  
EXPLANATION  
OF THE  
*CHURCH CATECHISM,*  
BY FAMILIAR  
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS,  
ADAPTED TO THE CAPACITY  
OF YOUTH.

BY THE

---

---

Rev. H. DRAPER, A.M.

---

---

1799.





## AN EXPLANATION, &c.

---

*Q.* **W**HAT is your name?

*A.* N. or M.

*Q.* What doth your Christian name denote?

*A.* That I am, by baptism, introduced to the visible professing church of **CHRIST**.

*Q.* Who gave you this name?

*A.* My Godfathers and Godmothers, in my baptism, wherein I was made a member of **CHRIST**, the child of **GOD**, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.

*Q.* What is it to be a member of **CHRIST**?

*A.* To be united unto him by a true and living faith; who saith, "I am the vine, ye are branches."

*Q.* What is it to be a child of **GOD**?

*A.* To be regenerate, and born again of water and of the **HOLY SPIRIT**.

*Q.* Who are inheritors of the kingdom of heaven?

*A.* All true believers, who are called the sons of **GOD**; and if sons, then they are heirs, heirs of **GOD**, and joint heirs with **JESUS CHRIST** our **LORD**.

*Q.* Doth baptism, by water alone, either entitle you to, or put you into the possession of these privileges?

*A.* No; We have no right to spiritual blessings, but what is derived from our **LORD JESUS CHRIST**. And we are put into possession of them, not by mere water baptism, but by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the **HOLY GHOST**, of which that is the outward and visible sign.

*Q.* What did your Godfathers and Godmothers then for you?

*A.* They did promise and vow three things in my name; First, that I should renounce the devil, and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh; Secondly, that I should believe all the articles of the *Christian* faith; and Thirdly, that I should keep GOD's holy will and commandments all the days of my life.

*Q.* What is it to renounce the things you have named?

*A.* Not to follow, or be led by them.

*Q.* What is it to believe all the articles of the Christian faith?

*A.* To receive them as great truths of GOD, which are essentially connected with our everlasting happiness.

*Q.* What is it to keep GOD's holy will and commandments?

*A.* To strive by the help of GOD that all our thoughts, words, and deeds, may be consistent therewith.

*Q.* Dost thou not think that thou art bound to believe and to do, as they have promised for thee?

*A.* Yes, verily; and by GOD's help so I will. And I heartily thank our heavenly FATHER, that he hath called me to this state of salvation, through JESUS CHRIST our SAVIOUR. And I pray unto GOD to give me his grace, that I may continue in the same unto my life's end.

*Q.* What do you mean by a state of salvation?

*A.* I mean, that state of deliverance from the guilt, the love, and power of sin, as well as the enjoyment of reconciliation and favor with GOD into which believers are brought, through our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

*Q.* Rehearse the Articles of thy Belief.

*A.* I BELIEVE in GOD the FATHER ALMIGHTY, maker of heaven and earth; and in JESUS CHRIST his only



SON our LORD; who was conceived by the HOLY GHOST, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried, he descended into hell, the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right-hand of GOD the FATHER ALMIGHTY; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the HOLY GHOST; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

*Q.* What do you mean by the Holy Catholic Church?

*A.* The universal church of CHRIST, composed of believers from every nation, and tongue, and kindred, and people.

*Q.* What do you mean by the communion of saints?

*A.* That holy intercourse and fellowship which prevails among those who are sanctified by the SPIRIT of GOD.

*Q.* What dost thou chiefly learn in these Articles of thy Belief.

*A.* First, I learn to believe in GOD the FATHER, who hath made me and all the world; Secondly, in GOD the SON, who hath redeemed me, and all mankind; Thirdly, in GOD the HOLY GHOST, who sanctifieth me and all the elect people of GOD.

*Q.* In what manner did GOD the SON redeem his people?

*A.* By his life, death, and resurrection. "He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification."

*Q.* What do you mean when you say that GOD the HOLY GHOST sanctifieth you, and all the elect people of GOD?

*A.* I mean, that by his gracious influences, all the people

of GOD are separated from the love of sin ; brought into the love of holiness ; and enabled to glorify GOD by obedience to his righteous commandments.

*Q.* Why do you call the people of GOD elect ?

*A.* Because GOD hath from the beginning chosen them unto salvation, “ through sanctification of the SPIRIT, and belief of the truth.”

*Q.* You said that your Godfathers and Godmothers did promise for you that you should keep GOD’s commandments ; tell me how many there be ?

*A.* Ten.

*Q.* Which be they ?

*A.* The same which GOD spake in the twentieth chapter of Exodus, saying, I am the LORD thy GOD, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage.

*I.* Thou shalt have none other gods but ME.

*Q.* What doth the first commandment prohibit ?

*A.* It forbids the acknowledgement of any god except the LORD JEHOVAH ; and enjoins that we do not place that affection and dependance upon the creature which is due to the CREATOR alone.

*Q.* Repeat the second commandment.

*A.* Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them ; for I the LORD thy GOD am a jealous GOD, and visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me ; and shew mercy unto thousands in them that love me, and keep my commandments.

*Q.* What is forbidden by this commandment ?

*A.* It forbids us to worship the true GOD in a false manner ; and requires that we do not make idols of our enjoy-

## THE CHURCH CATECHISM.

v

ments, by seeking our happiness and peace from them, while we are unmindful of the LORD. Whatever has a tendency to withdraw our affection from GOD, becomes an idol, and as such, must be avoided.

*Q.* What is the third commandment?

*A.* Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy GOD in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

*Q.* What is hereby forbidden?

*A.* Not merely all prophane cursing and swearing; but likewise all irreverend and unnecessary mention of that great and glorious name, the LORD our GOD.

*Q.* Rehearse the fourth commandment.

*A.* Remember that thou keep holy the sabbath day. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all that thou hast to do; but the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy GOD. In it thou shalt do no manner of work, thou and thy son, and thy daughter, thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, thy cattle, and the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the LORD blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it.

*Q.* What doth this commandment require?

*A.* It requires that we duly observe the sabbath day, by devoting it in an especial manner to the service of GOD, as well in our own houses, as in his holy temple. It particularly forbids all attention to worldly business, and indulgence in carnal recreations.

*Q.* What is the fifth commandment?

*A.* Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the LORD thy GOD giveth thee.

*Q.* What is included in this precept?

*A.* It requires that we pay unto our earthly parents that



tribute of affectionate obedience which is their due ; that we are respectful and attentive to our instructors, and that we “ render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar’s, and unto GOD the things which be GOD’s.”

Q. Repeat the sixth commandment.

A. Thou shalt do no murder.

Q. What is here prohibited ?

A. This precept not only forbids us to embrue our hands in the blood of a fellow creature, but likewise forbids the dispositions of malice, hatred, and revenge, which are the seeds of murder ; it prohibits the exercise of cruelty to the brute creation, and may be understood as an injunction not to murder our time by abuse and neglect ; nor our souls by the works of sin and disobedience.

Q. Recite the seventh commandment.

A. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Q. What is the design of this commandment ?

A. It was intended to restrain all uncleanness in our conduct and conversation, and to prevent the indulgence of impure thoughts. Our blessed LORD saith, “ Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hate already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

Q. What is the eighth commandment ?

A. Thou shalt not steal.

Q. What doth this precept include ?

A. It requires that we know and respect the property of our neighbour ; that we do not attempt to deprive him of it, either by open violence, or secret fraud.

Q. What is the ninth commandment ?

A. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

Q. What is here forbidden ?

A. This commandment enjoins that we do not injure our neighbour by a false testimony, nor take away his character by the propagation of scandal.

Q. Repeat the tenth commandment ?

A. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his.

Q. What is here enjoined ?

A. This commandment requires us to restrain every sentiment of covetousness, and not to suffer our eyes, or our heart to wander after the property of another, but to be content with such things as we have.

Q. What is the extent of this holy law ?

A. It is designed to regulate our thoughts, words and deeds, and it requires a perfect unsinning obedience.

Q. What is the design thereof ?

A. It serves as a schoolmaster to bring the sinner to CHRIST, and as a rule of life it teacheth every true believer to glorify GOD by the fruits of obedience.

Q. What is the consequence of disobedience to the law of GOD.

A. The curse of GOD will fall upon those who disobey. For it is written, " Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.

Q. What is the result of obedience to this law ?

A. It will be admitted as an evidence, that our love to the blessed JESUS, and our faith in him, were not merely professional, but real and active. And though our obedience cannot claim a reward of merit, yet we are assured that it shall receive an abundant recompense of grace.

Q. What dost thou chiefly learn by these commandments ?

A. I learn two things ; my duty towards GOD, and my duty towards my neighbour.

Q. What is thy duty towards GOD ?

A. My duty towards GOD is to believe in him, to fear

him, and to love him with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength ; to worship him, to give him thanks, to put my whole trust in him, to call upon him, to honor his holy name and his word, and to serve him truly all the days of my life.

Q. What is thy duty towards thy neighbour ?

A. My duty towards my neighbour, is to love him as myself, and to do to all men as I would they should do unto me. To love, honour, and succour my father and mother. To honour and obey the King, and all that are put in authority under him. To submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors, and masters. To order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters. To hurt nobody by word or deed. To be true and just in all my dealings. To bear no malice or hatred in my heart. To keep my hands from picking and stealing, and my tongue from evil speaking, lying, and slandering. To keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity. Not to covet nor desire other men's goods ; but to learn and labour truly to get mine own living, and to do my duty in that state of life, unto which it shall please GOD to call me.

Cate. My good child, know this, that thou art not able to do these things of thyself, nor to walk in the commandments of GOD, and to serve him, without his special grace ; which thou must learn at all times to call for by diligent prayer. Let me hear therefore if thou canst say the LORD's prayer.

A. OUR Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name ; thy kingdom come ; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven ; give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us ; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil Amen.

Q. What right have you to call GOD, your Father ?



*A.* Because he created, and supports me. But most particularly because he is my reconciled GOD and FATHER, through our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Q. What do you mean, when you say Hallowed be thy name?

*A.* It is the same as if I should say, for ever blessed, praised and exalted be thy great and glorious name, O LORD GOD ALMIGHTY.

Q. What do you pray for in those words, Thy kingdom come?

*A.* I pray that the LORD's kingdom of grace may by his divine power be established in my heart, and in the hearts of all men; and if it be his blessed will, that the kingdom of glory may be hastened.

Q. What do you pray for in those words, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven?

*A.* I pray that the will of GOD may be performed by his sinful creatures here on earth, with the same readiness and alacrity that it is by the holy angels, and glorified saints in heaven.

Q. What do you intend when you say, Give us this day our daily bread?

*A.* I pray that GOD would graciously be pleased to feed me with food convenient for me, and to nourish my soul with his heavenly grace unto eternal life.

Q. What do you intend by that petition, Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us?

*A.* I pray that GOD would for the sake of JESUS CHRIST pardon all my transgressions; and from a sense of his forgiving love enable me freely to forgive all those who have offended me.

Q. What do you pray for when you say, Lead us not into temptation?

*A.* I pray that GOD would not suffer me to be tempted

## AN EXPLANATION OF

above what I am able, but with the temptation also, make a way to escape, that I may be able to bear it.

Q. What do you intend by that petition, Deliver us from evil?

A. I pray that GOD would preserve me from an evil world; from that evil spirit who goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, and from the delusions of my own deceitful, and desperately wicked heart.

Q. What is intended by the word, Amen?

A. It expresseth our earnest desire, that the LORD may perform our petitions, and our hope that our prayer will be heard.

Q. What desirest thou of GOD in this prayer?

A. I desire my LORD GOD our heavenly FATHER, who is the giver of all goodness, to send his grace unto me, and to all people, that we may worship him, serve him, and obey him as we ought to do. And I pray unto GOD that he will send us all things that be needful both for our souls and bodies; and that he will be merciful unto us, and forgive us our sins; and that it will please him to save and defend us in all dangers ghostly and bodily; and that he will keep us from all sin and wickedness, and from our ghostly enemy, and from everlasting death. And this I trust he will do of his mercy and goodness, through our LORD JESUS CHRIST; and therefore I say Amen! So be it!

Q. Whom do you speak of as your ghostly enemy?

A. Satan.

Q. Why do you give him this appellation?

A. Because he is constantly endeavouring to destroy my soul. He goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

Q. How many sacraments hath CHRIST ordained in his church?

*A.* Two only, as generally necessary to salvation ; that is to say, baptism, and the supper of the LORD.

Q. What meanest thou by this word Sacrament ?

*A.* I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, given unto us, ordained by CHRIST himself as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.

Q. How many parts are there in a *Sacrament* ?

*A.* Two ; the outward and visible sign, and the inward spiritual grace.

Q. What is the outward visible sign, or form in baptism ?

*A.* Water ; wherein the person is baptized in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST.

Q. What is the inward and spiritual grace ?

*A.* A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness ; for being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace.

Q. What is required of persons to be baptized ?

*A.* Repentance, whereby they forsake sin ; and faith whereby they steadfastly believe the promises of GOD made to them in that sacrament.

Q. How are repentance and faith to be obtained ?

*A.* By diligent prayer unto ALMIGHTY GOD, from whom alone cometh every good and perfect gift.

Q. Why then are infants baptized, when by reason of their tender age they cannot perform them ?

*A.* Because they promise them both by their sureties, which promise, when they come to age, themselves are bound to perform.

Q. Who are the sureties ?

*A.* The godfathers, and godmothers.

Q. Do they engage that the child they represent, shall have repentance and faith ?



*A.* No; They only engage that the "child shall be virtuously brought up, to lead a godly and a christian life."

Q. You say that the child when he comes of age, is bound to fulfil these engagements. What is your meaning?

*A.* That it is the duty of every such person, by earnest prayer to request that God would give him grace to repent, and believe unto the salvation of his soul.

Q. Why was the sacrament of the LORD's supper ordained?

*A.* For the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of CHRIST, and of the benefits which we receive thereby.

Q. What is the outward part, or sign of the LORD's supper?

*A.* Bread and wine, which the LORD hath commanded to be received.

Q. What is the inward part, or thing signified?

*A.* The body and blood of CHRIST, which are verily, and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the LORD's supper.

Q. In what manner are the body and blood of CHRIST received by the faithful in this holy sacrament.

*A.* \*They are received after an heavenly, and spiritual manner. The mean whereby they are received is faith.

Q. What are the benefits whereof we are partakers thereby?

*A.* The strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the body and blood of CHRIST, as our bodies are by the bread and wine.

Q. What is required of them who come to the LORD's supper?

*A.* To examine themselves, whether they repent them

\* See 28th Article of religion.

truly of their former sins, steadfastly purposing to lead a new life ; have a lively faith in GOD's mercy, through CHRIST, with a thankful remembrance of his death, and be in charity with all men.

Merely to have learned, or speculatively to understand this form of sounds words, will not avail to the salvation of the soul. It is said, " with the heart, man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Those therefore with whom our youth are entrusted, should not be content to have so instructed them. It is their duty to seek by prayer for the blessing of GOD, without which all their instructions will produce no good effect. They ought likewise to bring up their pupils in the practice of daily prayer, to enforce as much as possible the necessity of experimental and practical godliness. Were these things more regarded, parents and instructors would not so often have the heart ache, from the profligacy of youth ; nor would our youth be ruined in character, constitution and property through the criminal indulgence of parents, and the equally condemnable neglect of self appointed teachers. The LORD raise up faithful shepherds to nourish the lambs of his flock with the wholesome words of sound doctrine ; and may he abundantly bless their exertions to the glory of his Name, and the salvation of those entrusted to their care !

F I N I S.

---

*Printed at the Philanthropic Reform, London-Road,  
ST. GEORGE'S FIELDS.*

5 MA 56

)



